



# PROCEEDINGS OF THE GIBRALTAR PARLIAMENT

**MORNING SESSION: 10.30 a.m. – 8.31 p.m.**

**Gibraltar, Monday, 26th July 2021**

## **Contents**

Appropriation Bill 2021 – Second Reading – Debate continued .....	3
<i>The House recessed at 12.30 p.m. and resumed its sitting at 12.45 p.m.</i> .....	24
Appropriation Bill 2021 – Second Reading– Debate continued .....	25
<i>The House recessed at 2.10 p.m. and resumed its sitting at 3.26 p.m.</i> .....	40
Appropriation Bill 2021 – Second Reading – Debate continued .....	41
<i>The House recessed at 5.25 p.m. and resumed its sitting at 5.47 p.m.</i> .....	63
Appropriation Bill 2021 – Debate concluded – Second reading approved .....	63
Appropriation Bill 2021 – Committee Stage and Third Reading to be taken at this sitting ...	63
Supplementary Appropriation (2016/2017) Bill 2019 – First Reading approved .....	64
Supplementary Appropriation (2016/2017) Bill 2019 – Second Reading approved .....	64
Supplementary Appropriation (2016/2017) Bill 2019 – Committee Stage and Third Reading to be taken at this sitting .....	69
Supplementary Appropriation (2017/2018) Bill 2019 – First Reading approved .....	69
Supplementary Appropriation (2017/2018) Bill 2019 – Second Reading approved .....	69
Supplementary Appropriation (2017/2018) Bill 2019 – Committee Stage and Third Reading to be taken at this sitting .....	72
Supplementary Appropriation (2018/2019) Bill 2019 – First Reading approved .....	72
Supplementary Appropriation (2018/2019) Bill 2020 – Second Reading approved .....	73
Supplementary Appropriation (2018/2019) Bill 2020 – Committee Stage and Third Reading to be taken at this sitting .....	75
<i>In Committee of the whole House</i> .....	75

GIBRALTAR PARLIAMENT, MONDAY, 26th JULY 2021

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Supplementary Appropriation (2016/2017) Bill 2020 – Clauses considered and approved .	75
Supplementary Appropriation (2017/2018) Bill 2020 – Clauses considered and approved .	76
Supplementary Appropriation (2018/2019) Bill 2020 – Clauses considered and approved .	76
Appropriation (2021/2022) Bill 2020 – Clauses considered and approved .....	77
Supplementary Appropriation (2016/2017) Bill 2021; Supplementary Appropriation (2017/2018) Bill 2021; Supplementary Appropriation (2018/2019) Bill 2021; Appropriation Bill 2021 – Third Reading approved: Bills passed .....	97
Adjournment.....	99
<i>The House adjourned at 8.31 p.m.</i> .....	99

# The Gibraltar Parliament

*The Parliament met at 10.30 a.m.*

[MR SPEAKER: Hon. M L Farrell BEM GMD RD JP *in the Chair*]

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

## **Appropriation Bill 2021 – Second Reading – Debate continued**

**Clerk:** Meeting of Parliament, Monday, 26th July 2021.

We continue with the First and Second Readings of the Appropriation Bill.

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

**Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo):** Mr Speaker, thank you.

We have heard a lot in the past four days of debating these appropriations. Hon. Members who are Ministers on this side of the House have presented spending commitments that seek to preserve the integrity of the public purse as much as possible and return stability to our public finances, to prudently deliver growth but to get our economy growing again, and to restore in great measure and stabilise the public finances. That is what you have heard from my colleagues on what it is that each of them is going to do in the public offices that are assigned to them under the Gibraltar Constitution. Every penny of how they are going to spend the money is in the Book that is before the House. We have heard more detail than ever before. From each Minister what you have seen is the detail of that commitment, the sheer hard work, the desire to deliver and the commitment to what we are doing together for our people. And from the shadows, shallow criticism, armchair keyboard-warrior stuff, nothing of real substance and just spin of the most transparent sort. That is despite the fact that there are four lawyers there, two of them silks. One of the silks made no impact, and he is the Leader of the Opposition, and the other silk, who used to be the Leader of the Opposition – a former Leader of the Opposition, a FLOP – made the wrong impact, for reasons that I will once again explain to him.

Thank goodness they are not the Government at this difficult time, because we have also had to endure more dissembling, more disingenuous conjecture and more untruths than we have ever had to endure in this House before. At this particular time in our history it is not fair that the Gibraltarians have to have that sort of political game being played with the most important post-closed-Frontier Budget in our history, so what I am going to do today is set the record straight because I believe in the Gibraltarians, and in the end the Gibraltarians get it right. In their guts the Gibraltarians know who to trust, they know how to sift through all of the information that is put out there and they know how to make the right decisions for Gibraltar.

All we heard from Members opposite was that they would somehow have already done a deal with the EU, they would have surfed the COVID wave to a land of plenty and away from some alleged decay that the hon. Lady referred to. Apart from Mr Feetham, the rest were saying that we had delivered nothing, but at the same time they were saying that we had spent too much trying to deliver everything. And then the sweepers come in from the left and say that they would have done more and they would have spent less in doing so.

This is unbelievable stuff, Mr Speaker. This is not even political science fiction. The people of Gibraltar are left in utter incredulity at the shamefaced attempt by the Opposition to pretend that they can redo the truth. If anyone believes what they were being told by Members of the  
40 Opposition, despite the inherent lack of logic and the conflicting principles that they put, I recommend that they should go and see their doctor as soon as possible. The Gibraltarians are not stupid and they do not believe such nonsense – because that is what it is, utter nonsense.

At this time and in this generation what we need is a great Opposition, and we have instead an Opposition that is spinning out of control and then trying to spin a great and impossible yarn.  
45 Gibraltar deserves better for the upwards of £¼ million that the Opposition costs – upwards of £¼ million sitting on those benches to come and tell us the things that they have told us. Their salaries are a first charge on the Consolidated Fund, otherwise I would be minded to move an amendment to deprive them each of only one penny, just to demonstrate that the people of Gibraltar deserve better. They are lucky. The Hon. Mr Clinton said that the Principal Auditor could  
50 not do his value for money audit. They are lucky that the Principal Auditor cannot do his value for money audit. He might have something to say. (*Interjection*)

I want to analyse two things as I start my address this morning. I want to analyse the two standout positions of the GSD Opposition from the two key speeches delivered, neither of them, ironically, from the Leader of the Opposition. There are two standout propositions which they  
55 have set out in their two key addresses which I must highlight and I will highlight throughout my intervention.

The first key speech which alighted on this key factor was from my shadow on the public finances, Mr Clinton. Mr Clinton said this on waste. I made a note of what he said. I have gone back to check the transcript and checked his written speech. This is a direct quote:

I can already identify one clear area of waste – if the Chief Minister wants to take a note – and it is simply this, and this really is quite remarkable: why on earth do we have two sets of the 2021-22 Estimates Book?

That is a key proposition from the Shadow Member for Public Finance. The only area of waste  
60 I can find in the Book is the fact that there are two books – £1,062 it cost to print – to help the House, especially today, in the Committee Stage, when we have to go through it. And if we had not done it, Mr Speaker, *cual quieria lo escucha?* Who might have cared to hear him? The serious point is that he has said to this House, in the discharge of his responsibilities as the Shadow  
65 Member for Public Finance, that there is only one area of waste that he can identify in the Book. That is a key concession by the Opposition. However much of a ‘Killroy’ he is on other matters, he really did make my day on that.

The second standout proposition, equally important and fundamental to understand the Opposition’s positioning on this debate, was, of course, from Mr Feetham, a man who does not  
70 just have fire in his belly, he must have a raging arsonist having a go at him, because despite the comedy that he led us to – and I will come to that later – I thought he made an excellent intervention this year, and I will come to all of the detail later. Despite the comedy, he made this key concession in his speech. It is fundamental. He had to make it. He knew he had to make it because logic stood in the way of everything else that he wanted to say, but it guts everything else  
75 that he said and everything else that they said. I quote: ‘Mr Speaker, of course, no one, no one, no one on this side of the House is saying that if they had been prudent with the people’s money over the last 10 years we could have avoided a £157 million deficit, which is, of course, COVID related, and no one could have predicted the pandemic.’ He only said it once. There were parts of his speech that he repeated on a number of occasions, especially ‘I told you so’, but this he only  
80 said once, and he said it almost sotto voce. So, let’s make sure that everyone who is listening to this debate or watching this debate beyond this House, everyone in this House, and indeed the person to whom I address most of my submissions, the person who sits there listening studiously to us whilst they transcribe *Hansard*, let’s make sure that he or she gets what they said, because in the context of everything else that they said, listen to this key concession: ‘Mr Speaker, of

85 course, no one, no one, no one' – three times – 'on this side of the House is saying that if they had  
been prudent with the people's money over the last 10 years we could have avoided a £157 million  
deficit, which is, of course, COVID related, and no one could have predicted the pandemic.' I am  
grateful to the hon. Gentleman for being true to logic and true to reality in making that key  
concession. But of course the whole of his speech, the whole of all of their submissions were based  
90 around 'I told you so'. In fact, in the speech that he sent to the media he actually put the title 'We  
told you so'. What he should have done is follow it with a bullet point that said, 'But I accept it  
would have made no difference,' – instead of coyly hiding his line and delivering it so sotto voce –  
'that even if you had acted like I told you so, we would have ended up in the same place,' except  
of course without new schools, without new affordable homes, without all of the things that we  
95 have done: 'I told you so, but we would have ended up in the same place.'

Those are two key fundamental concessions by the Opposition and they thwart the logic of the  
rest of the argument. If we were in a court – not in the court of public opinion, where we are, but  
actually in a court – those two aspects that I have just alighted on now would be writing the judge's  
judgment all on their own and finding for this side. Indeed, those are such fundamental  
100 concessions to all of the theories that they have put before the people – not today, for the past  
eight years since Mr Feetham became Leader of the Opposition – that they would probably have  
had costs awarded against them on an indemnity basis too, because everything that they have  
said for the past eight years they have accepted would have led to absolutely no difference in the  
final position to which we had arrived when the worldwide pandemic hit. I thank them for, first of  
105 all, accepting that they can identify no more waste in the Book, and secondly, for that key  
concession which settles the argument of the past eight years, the argument on the 2015 election  
and the argument of the 2019 election settled by the mouth of Mr Feetham himself. I think the  
phrase *por la boca muere el pez* was used in another context, which I shall come to later, but it  
could not have been used more appropriately than in this one. These two concessions disembowel  
110 the rest of their theories.

There is a key problem in this Parliament, or there is a key novelty in this Parliament, and that  
is that we all quite like each other, and that means that replying in this debate is a little harder  
because you have personal relationships, some of them built perhaps in the last six to nine  
months, or years, we have dealt with COVID. But they have been very tough on us, Mr Speaker,  
115 and when they were tough on us, very tough – the hon. Lady has been remarkably tough on me  
in particular – I assume they thought that being that tough on us meant that we would be  
nonetheless able to continue with our personal friendships. I expect exactly the same thing back  
after today, because I am going to be very tough in my reply, but I am not going to insult them  
once.

120 They have said on a number of occasions, through different speeches, that we have bottled it.  
'This Government has bottled it,' they said. I think that is a bit rich, given that we have been at the  
crease at this hugely difficult time, a *hugely* difficult time. The Leader of the Opposition said that  
we had bottled it when we called the referendum on abortion: 'The Government has bottled –'  
Do not worry. He does not need to worry, Mr Speaker, I will give him his direct quote. In fact, we  
125 have not bottled it. What we have sitting opposite us are seven transparent bottles sitting on  
seven green chairs. By the time I have finished replying to them today, I think people will see that,  
from their own words, they have accidentally fallen, slipped like the seven green bottles of the  
popular nursery rhyme. In doing so, I will not be insulting them. I am not going to insult them at  
all. I am going to humiliate them using the truth and their own words. Nothing will be more  
130 humiliating.

This year, we heard the first speech as Leader of the Opposition from Mr Azopardi. It was not  
impressive – I do not think anyone could have described it as impressive – and certainly not up to  
the standard of a Leader of the Opposition, let alone one who has been a Minister before and  
knows the ropes. I might have forgiven somebody else, but he had been a Minister before. He  
135 knows the ropes. Even Mr Phillips, who was absolutely awful in 2019, was better than the Leader  
of the Opposition. Mr Feetham is right – at least Mr Phillips has fire in the belly. I thought things

would get better for the GSD when Mr Azopardi came into Parliament, but in fact things have got worse. Even Killroy, who was bumbling, hard to make out, repetitive, simply stuck with the narrative that he developed in his first Budget address in 2016 and cannot escape, was less awful than the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr Feetham, I have to say, was absolutely excellent, he was absolutely magnificent, but of course excellent and magnificent only in one cause: in the cause of his own ambitions. He was not a particularly good advocate for any particular theory or position – in fact, he is the one who gave away the sentence I have just read – but he had the presence.

Mr Bossino was just slim and shady – and even calling Mr Bossino Slim Shady cannot for one moment be suggested to be an insult because I did not coin that name for him, Mr Feetham did, and I am sure that they do not insult each other on that side. No, they are colleagues, they are friends, they get along magnificently well. I am just adopting the moniker that Mr Feetham took for him. This is obviously not an insult.

Even when I say that Mr Feetham writes under an assumed name on social media I cannot be insulting him, because all I am doing is reflecting what the record shows Miss Hassan Nahon said, although Miss Hassan Nahon crossed a Rubicon that no other has. She delivered a speech that politicised the death of 94 Gibraltarians. It was, in my view, Mr Speaker, and respectfully, the most callous and inelegant position ever taken in this Parliament by any parliamentarian, a real low and a real pity, if I may say so.

By the end of today, when I have finished replying to all of them, they will be hard pressed to say that I have insulted them at all, but that does not mean that I am not going to wade into the sand banks of the shallowness of their positions to illustrate to people just how wrong they are, with no insults, just the facts and their own words, and that is what will hurt them most, to be reminded of their own words. That is what will humiliate them the most, when we hold up their words to the light – their own words held up to the scrutiny of analysis.

They do not like it when I respond to them here, not because I insult them; they do not like my reply in the Budget address because I tell it like it is, and I will not resile, in doing so, from my reference to malcontents. Yes, malcontents, Mr Speaker. They are malcontents as those who claim are more, without seeing that what we have to have regard to would make giving more even more dangerous for the stability of the public finances. They complain when we spend money, they complain when we save money, they complain when we do something and they complain when we do not. I am very clear that this coming autumn and winter of the malcontents will be just as ineffective for them as it has been since December 2012.

I thought that Mr Daryanani, in his first Budget address, coined a magnificent phrase to describe them: ‘bandwagoneering’. I looked it up. I like the term, but actually it is ‘bandwagoning’. Bandwagoning is the term in international relations used to describe a strategy employed by states that find themselves in a position of weakness. How appropriate. That is what they do all the time, bandwagoning from their position of weakness with those whom they perceive have a stronger or better moral argument than they do, because they have no moral arguments to teach this Government. They have been in government, they have done things, and when we do the same things they say we should not do them, so they have no moral authority whatsoever to bring to this House on any argument in respect of borrowing, in respect of companies or in respect of debt generally, despite the fact that we are facing an Opposition with more lawyers in it than ever before, I think, and two of them silks. There was nothing to reply to that was of substance. It was very lacklustre, very low quality, and in this time and generation, and given these difficulties, to see an Opposition behaving like rabbits stuck in the headlights in the face of this Budget was really quite remarkable. Rabbits, Mr Speaker. No lions and certainly no lioness. What Gibraltar needs now is lions and lionesses, not meek bunny rabbits stuck in headlights who would not know what to do. Rabbits are fine for paella or *al ajillo* but not to run a government in a difficult time, not to lead.

One thing that I cannot work out this year, though, is where they are in their attitude to the Father of the House. In 2019 they were all about Joe Bossano and his golden rules. It was a position

190 that I very much welcomed. This year, they seem to have shifted again. They were a little anti-  
Bossano in their approach. I do not get how they can change like that, although Mr Bossino has  
changed so much on Bossano, which I will come to, and Mr Azopardi as well. I am firmly pro-  
Bossano, his teachings and the golden rules. That is why we are going to ensure that the borrowing  
195 that we have had to do for recurrent expenditure is going to be wrapped up into a fund that will  
be paid off as capital. We will not continue to borrow to pay for recurrent expenditure, because  
that is the noose that strangles. That is the opposite of the goose that lays eggs: the noose that  
strangles. So, I will continue with Sir Joda's rules and his sacred texts, but in defending him now  
they are starting to make me feel like the Mandalorian, having to protect the Yoda and the sacred  
200 texts. I remember when they used to decry the golden rules. Their GSD in which Mr Azopardi sat  
came into this House, with slightly darker wood panelling, and said that the golden rules were  
nonsense. Then they came to this House, when it was convenient, to say that the golden rules  
were essential. This year, I do not know where they are on the golden rules. They have a lack of  
consistency in everything, and these are the people who are attacking us.

Well, let's see who they are, Mr Speaker. Mr Azopardi is the person who holds the office of  
205 Leader of the Opposition, but he did not get up to address us like one. Mr Phillips is the person  
who kept warm the office of the Leader of the Opposition, Mr Bossino is the person who would  
like to be the Leader of the Opposition, Mr Feetham is the person who used to be the Leader of  
the Opposition and Mr Clinton is the person who tried to hold the office of the Leader of the  
Opposition. That is what we are dealing with here. The hon. Lady is the person who thought she  
was going to be the Leader of the Opposition but did not make it, even though she topped the list  
210 of people in opposition – top of the losers' polls but nothing else.

I am going to go through each of their election-losing contributions one by one now, but before  
I start those more detailed points I want to address one point on social progress. Gibraltar voted  
in favour of safe and legal abortions in the referendum, not because the Government bottled it,  
which is what the Leader of the Opposition said in his interview on the night, at the University; in  
215 fact, Gibraltar voted in the referendum on abortion because it was a manifesto commitment of  
the parties that won the General Election, and we won by two votes to one. So there was no bottle  
in convening the referendum. He is shrugging his shoulders, like saying, 'What has this got to do  
with this debate? What has it to do with the appropriation, that I said that you had bottled it?'  
Well, I will tell him what it has to do with it, because as we go through the reply I have to give him  
220 and we go through the things that he says and how he changes his position, how he fails to  
understand things, I am going to show him how he has changed on that, too.

We had the courage to put the issue of abortion to three votes. We put it here in a Bill, we put  
it in the manifesto and we put it in the referendum. So, fancy a Leader of the Opposition who has  
forgotten that we had those commitments – when they put the lights on, the rabbit gets stuck in  
225 the headlights. He is asked why there was a referendum and he says, 'Because the Government  
bottled it.' But has he forgotten something even more fundamental? When he had appointed  
Mr Phillips *a dedo* to be the parliamentary Leader of the Opposition he sent Mr Phillips here to  
tell us that *they* wanted a referendum:

A free referendum on abortion, decoupled from this Bill, is necessary and a failure to recognise this is a failure to  
listen to the voice of the majority of this community.

Line 665, page 16, 12th July 2019. Then, at line 690:

If the Government were courageous and principled and believed in their abortion on demand law they should have  
no difficulty in accepting the view of the people and subject the decision to the widest possible debate in an  
unrestrained and free referendum.

230 And then, at line 715:

Middle Gibraltar should be allowed the opportunity to speak in a free, unrestrained referendum.

Mr Speaker, there was no policy to bottle it, using his language. They wanted a referendum too. Whenever they say things – and that is why this is important, because I am going to go through the things that they said in this debate – they forget the thing they have said before. They say things in the moment without analysing consequences or history. We know now that  
235 Mr Phillips was saying things in that debate which he did not mean, because he then told us what he believed should be the case, but what on earth was the current Leader of the Opposition doing two months ago, saying that the Government had bottled it when we called a referendum? Did he forget the speech that he wrote for Mr Phillips, to come to this House in July 2019? That makes him the first transparent bottle sitting on a green bench.

240 I know, and all of us in this House know that he is more ambitious than his style suggests, but frankly, after the intervention he made on Tuesday, I propose to Wikipedia that they should upload his photograph for the definition of ‘damp squib’, because a picture is certainly worth a thousand words – and this is the man who used to attack me for not having charisma. He may have forgotten that those are the press releases he used to write before 2011. I am expecting to  
245 receive a Christmas card from him this year that says ‘Happy Charismaless, from Keith’, given his delivery. For the money that he is getting as the Leader of the Opposition he really owed this House a lot more.

In any event, the legitimacy of his position as the Leader of the Opposition is a matter for them, but it was very clear at the time that he stood as leader of the party that he had not been a  
250 member for two years, which is what their constitution provided – an important point as well when it comes to the constitutional points that they make, because if their leader is not elected even in keeping with the published constitution of the GSD, what does that say for the respect that they will have for the Constitution of Gibraltar when they are in power?

Perhaps I am showing my age a little, but I do sometimes fondly remember those comedy classic’s *Carry on Dick*, *Carry on Jack* and *Carry on Henry*. That is the first thing I thought of when he got up the other day. This was really becoming a case of ‘Carry on Keith’. It was absolutely  
255 dreadful. He started by attacking us because we hark back to the past, and then what did he do? He had not got one paragraph into his speech when he started to hark back to the past. This man earns £65,000 as Leader of the Opposition. Gibraltar deserves better, Mr Speaker. And he is not a  
260 Minister. He gets £65,000 and he does not even have to go to the office of the Ministry in the morning. These Ministers work seven days a week. He gets to trouser £65,000 as Leader of the Opposition for one week a month, however much he might want to do or not do, and he did not even make a decent speech. It was all about the fact that we personalise politics. Well, that was incredible – which means lacking in credibility, which is absolutely true of the things that he told  
265 this House, totally lacking in credibility.

What is clear is that he thinks that his best tactic to get back to No. 6 Convent Place is to re-litigate the 1996 election – because they won that one, so he wants to fight that one. Or he is going to try and re-litigate the 2007 election, the 2011 election and the 2019 election – because  
270 he would quite like to have won those – all of the ones that he lost? I thought that all he was doing was looking for vindication, because there was no public finance analysis here – I suppose because he is not the shadow. He is not the shadow, so Mr Clinton delivers their analysis on public finance and Mr Feetham delivers their effective political speech, which leaves him where? Nowhere, with spin, soundbites of substance of nothing whatsoever – nothing to look at in the speech that you say you have to reply to. Of course I would say that, wouldn’t I? Of course I would say that, but  
275 James Neish, a columnist in the *Gibraltar Chronicle* not known to be a supporter of one side or the other, said this was really lacklustre, not even a good soundbite. There was no gravitas there.

It is clear that he is absolutely not a Muhammad Ali of the political ring. This is not a political heavyweight, like his predecessor as leader of the GSD, Sir Peter, or my predecessor, Sir Joe, or  
280 the hon. Lady’s father, Sir Joshua. All he does is fly like a butterfly from party to party and in and out of politics, but he never ever stings like a bee because he has not got it in him. It is clear that, however hard he tries, he has not got what it takes to be Chief Minister, at least not in the eyes of the public. He has not got what it takes to win three in a row, although he has demonstrated that

he has what it takes to lose three in a row. He has lost the last three that he has stood for as a party leader. Surely he cannot think it is an insult for me to refer to that, because that is just the  
 285 unvarnished and the unspun truth. Or has he forgotten the old days when the GSD and the PDP used to say to Joe Bossano that he had to resign as Leader of the House of the GSLP because he had lost three elections as leader? Will he take the advice that they gave to Sir Joe? I half hope not. At least Mr Feetham did. Mr Feetham lost as leader of the Labour Party in 2003, he lost the by-election as leader of the GSD when they were proposing the hon. Lady in 2013 and he lost the  
 290 General Election of 2015, and resigned as leader. He knows we were very sorry to see him go – and he said he had left for good. In all of that context Mr Azopardi’s attacks on me and the Hon. Dr Garcia are that what we have done wrong is get to the top of the greasy pole. I guess that is just jealousy that is coming across, isn’t it? When it comes to the greasy pole, he is so greased up he falls off every time. If he is equating us to political pole dancers, he is hitting the floor every  
 295 time he goes up the pole.

He accuses me of having changed party. Yes, it is true, I change party once, like Mr Bossino changed party once; not like Mr Feetham, who has been in three political parties – the GSLP, the Labour Party and the GSD. (**Hon. D A Feetham:** Two.) How can it be two, Mr Speaker? How can Mr Feetham, from a sedentary position during a debate on estimates, which involves numbers,  
 300 tell me that he has only been in two political parties? He has been in the GSLP, he has been in the Labour Party and has been in the GSD. I changed once, ergo I have been in two. I thought we were talking about the mathematics of the millions and the billions, not the mathematics of one and two. But the attack was against me for having changed once. Mr Bossino has changed once and Mr Feetham has changed twice, into three parties. The person here who has changed party most  
 305 often is the current Leader of the Opposition: the GMP, the GSD, the PDP and then back to the GSD. That is fine, but do not come here to attack us as if your most valuable missile against us is that I have changed party. Come on! They used to say that angelito Mr Feetham was not of GSD stock. What stock is he?

Well, Mr Speaker, we have got to the top of the greasy pole, and that is winning in politics.  
 310 Gibraltar needs winners to lead it, not losers. They keep slipping off the pole. Always the bridesmaid, never the bride. That is not success, that is failure. That is why I predict that he will soon be another FLOP, another former Leader of the Opposition, *con todo mi corazón*.

What we have now, in the context of the analysis that we are doing, is that he has admitted that he is the only person ever to have held ministerial office now in this place who has not been  
 315 a member of a government that has ever laid a brick in respect of housing. His excuse is that they were dealing with joint sovereignty – they had no way of creating affordable housing. Joint sovereignty started in 2002. They were in Government from 1996. Even Sir Peter had accepted the small electoral reprimand for not building homes in 2003, the year he left. Things got better under the GSD, then, on housing. They started to lay some bricks. But that guy, the Leader of the  
 320 Opposition, the man who was a Minister in the only Government since 1988 not to have laid a brick in respect of affordable housing, is the one attacking us for delays on affordable housing. Of course, he had his own home at the time, so he was not under pressure. He still relies on excuses, despite his abysmal record, while attacking us, but at the same time as he attacks us for not having done enough on affordable housing he attacks us for having spent too much inter alia on  
 325 affordable housing. It does not make any sense. When he wants to talk about rampant public spending, has he forgotten that he is the leader of the GSD? This is a party that spent £125,000 on each public toilet, and they installed 12 of them. Talk about spending a penny! That is rampant public spending – a lavish penny to be spent, indeed.

The strangest thing was to see a Leader of the Opposition quoting another Leader of the  
 330 Opposition more often than coming up with his own stuff. I salute Mr Feetham again. He obviously influenced the speech from Mr Azopardi greatly because Mr Azopardi constantly quoted the things that Mr Feetham had said. It is as if Mr Azopardi were wishing that Mr Feetham would come back to the leadership of the GSD. We do not mind. They can choose either. We are very happy with either. If Mr Feetham wanted to return, we would be delighted because Mr Feetham

335 at least puts up a great fight and is completely unelectable as leader of this community. So, he works for us, too. That would be perfect for us.

When you look at the detail of the things that the Hon. the Leader of the Opposition said, you really could not make it up. The first thing he said was that the Government has no direction or strategy, there was no vision in this Budget. The first thing I think about that is that he was not  
340 talking about us, he was talking about himself because there is no coherent position from the Opposition in this Budget. One of them says, 'If you had been prudent, you could have avoided this problem,' and the other one comes and guts that proposition and says, 'Even if you had been prudent, you could not have avoided this problem.'

It is nonsensical to say that we have no direction, no planning, no vision, but it is nothing new –  
345 he used to say those things of the GSD. The Leader of the GSD used to say of the GSD the things he has said about us. Here it is in his press release from the PDP on 29th June 2006:

Budget shows lack of planning and vision. The Budget announced by Government reveals both a lack of financial planning and a lack of vision.

Thank goodness for the *Panorama* archive, which goes back all the way. He can read it for himself. All he has done is repeat the press release that he wrote in 2006 to attack the party he now needs. There is no hope for those left behind for 10 years – all of that is in there. His reaction  
350 to us has been identical to his reaction to them when they were in government. This is very difficult to comprehend. Yes, I am saying that the Leader of the GSD today is saying to the GSLP Liberals the same things that he said to attack the GSD then. It is difficult to get your head round that.

Even the bit about the people who have been left behind for 10 years – who has been left behind for 10 years? Him, his political career. Nobody has been left behind for 10 years. These are  
355 the things that he hears on *Newsnight* or Sky News and scribbles down for the day when he has to come here, whether or not it is relevant – just like the time we had to deal with the references to National Insurance contributions, which Mr Feetham once told us had gone up, even though there is no such thing as a National Insurance contribution in Gibraltar. He had probably heard that on Sky News. Here, it is called Social Insurance. This one talks about the people who have  
360 been left behind. Give me the names of the people who have been left behind, so I can call them and help them. There is no one who has been left behind. People will be better off and people will be worse off, but no one has been left behind. What is it that they think we have spent the money on? They attack us for spending the money, ergo not leaving anyone behind. They attack us for spending the money to buy votes from those people. Well, at least 10,000 people have not been  
365 left behind. It is remarkable. It just does not make any sense. They complain when we spend, they complain when we do not spend, but they do not identify where we should spend in any event. The only waste in this Budget is the fact that we have printed the Book twice. How can they sustain the idea that there is no direction, that there is no planning, that there is no vision and that there are people left behind?

And what about this whole mantra that he has been developing now for a number of years –  
370 there is no certainty for us, although the UK has already done its treaty with the EU, no treaty after seven months, there are opportunities lost? Same old mantra that he has been talking about now for some time. I asked him, in what the Hon. Mr Bossino called my pre-emptive defence, to tell us in the context of his speech what were the opportunities that he, the Leader of the  
375 Opposition, said that we had failed to take. Not a dicky bird, Mr Speaker. He did not give us any indication of any opportunity that we might have lost, that we should have taken. There is a reason for that, of course: he would not have done anything differently. Mr Feetham told us that in the context of the last intervention he made in this House in 2019. We had left no stone unturned, he said, and I was grateful for that. But what was *his* plan? What are the opportunities that *he* would  
380 have pursued? That, he did not need to tell me in his speech because I remember what he said on 8th May 2017. He said that we should pursue Gibraltar becoming an EU protectorate with the President of the EU Commission being in charge of our external relations. So, Britain having left

the EU, we put ourselves in the hands of the EU, we go into a relationship of free association with the UK – and I will show you where he said that – and then we put Gibraltar’s future in the hands of the European Union President, the self-same European Union President who has now published the mandate that we all have rejected, with Spain in the European Commission and in the European Union and in the European Council. I do not forget these things. Does he? Is this the opportunity that he thinks we should have pursued? He wanted us to apply to become, under the European treaties, a European territory for whose external relations the President of the European Commission would be responsible. Black and white, his own hand. Does Mr Feetham agree with that? I do not. That is a direct quote. That was his tactic. That is the opportunity that we have failed to pursue. He cannot airbrush that huge mistake away. History does not forget. But he said that, of course, in the context of the things that he had said before. If he does not remember, I will give him a copy of the article, Mr Speaker, but these things are too important to think that you can forget them. In that context, what he said on 25th June 2008 was that his preferred option for Gibraltar was full independence, free association, and now with this added sting in the tail. Does Mr Feetham agree with that? Is that the policy of the GSD? That is the same week he was saying that the GSD had no planning, no vision, no direction in where it was going. This is his vision and his direction, and this is the opportunity lost. I do not think many people will forget what he thought the opportunities were that we should have taken. It is incredible how useful the brilliant *Panorama* archive can be.

These are fundamental issues. You do not get to flip-flop around these issues. Of course, this is in the context of the fact that he has published a book in which he has told us that he believes that the model Andorra solution is not joint sovereignty. It is there in his book, *Sovereignty and the Stateless Nation*, available at all second-hand booksellers. He does not think we should be closer to Britain. We do. He does not think that we should be closer to what he calls ‘lethargic’ Britain. That is what he said in his speech: lethargic Britain. He wants us divorced from Britain and in free association, full independence, with the President of the European Commission having control of our external relations. I am not saying it; he said it. It is in black and white under his name.

By the way, Mr Speaker, in his press release of 13th January 2011, in the run-up to the General Election of 2011, what he was also saying was that he was concerned at the level of debt. This is not his speech against me. This is the GSD leader’s New Year’s message now against the GSD. He was not the leader of the PDP, but that man, the man sitting there as Leader of the Opposition, the leader of the GSD, was saying a decade ago that he was concerned about the level of debt under the GSD because it was gross borrowing close to £½ billion – in fact, as we found out, it was in excess of £½ billion and there was much more hidden in companies.

This is just repeating things. He wrote a script in 2006, when he was trying to dethrone the GSD because they had taken on Mr Feetham, who was not of GSD stock, and he stuck to the script. That is the only consistency I can find, that he has said things against the GSD which, as the GSD, he is still saying against us. But in terms of missed opportunities, come on, let’s be clear, we do not want to become a colony of the EU, we do not want the role of the Foreign Secretary or the British government today taken by the President of the European Commission, which is what he told Gibraltar he believes should be the case in 2017. Come on, let’s get serious.

On the European Union mandate I want to be absolutely clear. It is not a flyer. It is not a basis for us to successfully negotiate a treaty. It is not going to resemble anything which is remotely acceptable based on that mandate because we are not in the position that he was in. So, how can he accuse me of coming here, or to Gibraltar, and waving the New Year’s Eve Agreement as if I were Chamberlain getting off the aeroplane from Berlin? We have not even published the New Year’s Eve Agreement. It was published by a leak in *El País*. Is he saying that I stood at the Piazza with *El País* and waved it like Chamberlain? It is nonsense. He just needed to shoehorn me into that example that he wanted to give.

I do have in my hand a paper, as Chamberlain said. It is a photocopy of the *Chronicle* of 8th May 2017, and I will give it to him later. ‘Taxation of working people is not the best way to fix

435 Government's funding problem,' he said. Well, we agree. That is why we have not raised tax in  
any of the Gib bands. That is why we have not raised tax on the allowance based system, but he  
thought we were and I think he wanted to read that line of his speech. We have raised tax for  
category 2 individuals and we have raised tax for people earning over £160,000, for HEPSS, for the  
440 people in that bracket, because we have protected working people. What I have to do now is  
protect working people from their untrue rhetoric that we have somehow raised tax for working  
people, because we have not.

He complains also about the high cost of the public sector. Given that that is in his speech, if  
we do anything to reduce the costs of the public sector, is he going to support it, or is he also going  
to dissemble? I would remind him – just like I reminded him of this – of the things that he has said  
445 in his speech today. He says one thing and then he does another. He is already bleating about  
Community Care. I will come to it in a moment, but frankly, to say that you have been to a  
demonstration to deliver a petition but that you have not signed the petition, that you do not  
support the petition, that you have not read the letter and that you do not know why you found  
yourself there – you might have been on the way to get a coffee and they just dragged you along –  
450 is frankly ridiculous. So, I would not be surprised, if we do take measures to reduce the costs of  
the public sector, if he says that he is against it, although he thought the cost of the public sector  
was too high.

He told me that we do not have a licence to spend £500 million. The £500 million of borrowing  
that we can secure with the sovereign guarantee, we have not spent it. We have told you how  
455 much we have spent. What is clear is that their prudence lasts as long as their popularity, that is  
to say very little given the share of the vote. No sooner had they finished advocating prudent  
spending of the £500 million that we might borrow with the UK's sovereign guarantee, they went  
out of this place and Mr Clinton ... I do not know what happened to him, something completely  
out of character. He went out to offer the bid more money than they had asked for. That really is  
460 remarkable. How can they say ever again that they are prudent when they do not negotiate the  
amounts that come out of the public purse to ensure that you promote growth in the economy,  
that you support something that is positive in our society, but that you do not throw the baby out  
with the bathwater – which is what they did? They argue against the *a mí me pertenece* culture,  
the culture of entitlement, and then they feed the very same tiger. If the Hon. Mr Clinton were a  
465 bariatric doctor, he would be recommending that patients should have extra cheeseburgers to  
deal with their obesity. That is the nonsense that we are dealing with.

They tell us that we should have more business assistance schemes. Well, we may have to have  
more business assistance schemes, but has he forgotten that he was telling me to pare back BEAT  
sooner than I pared it back? We do not know how COVID is going to develop; we may have to  
470 have more BEAT or different measures. But then, when we spent the money do not come here to  
complain that we have spent the money.

They say that this Budget is bad for business. Of course they would say that this Budget is bad  
for business, because it is what he was saying to the GSD in 2006, 2007, 2008 and 2009 when he  
was in the PDP, and he has stuck with that. But what is it about this Budget that is bad for business?  
475 That we have put up electricity 16% less than they would have? No, I am sorry, I am wrong, Mr  
Speaker, I have got my numbers wrong. That we have put electricity up 34% less than they would  
have? We have put electricity up 16% for consumers. They would have put it up 50% already. Here  
is the document. In euros they were going to do this loan, so if they did this loan in euros and then  
the euro went from £1.20-odd to almost parity with the pound, as it did, imagine what that would  
480 have done to our public finances. Thank goodness we were elected to stop it. Five per cent a year  
for 15 years, 75% increases in the cost of electricity to every consumer. My Budget is not bad for  
business. My Budget is a discount for business on what they would have had if they had been  
returned to office.

What is bad for business about the Government that I have led in the past two years? The  
485 allowances that we have introduced on training, on employees, on capital allowances, on write-  
downs, on marketing? The fact that we have paid for every employee in every business that we

closed? The fact that we have extended sick leave, so that people can take more sick leave if there is COVID? The fact that we waived or deferred Social Insurance and PAYE? That is what makes me bad for business? Business knows better. Business will not be led by the nose. Business knows that when the time came we were there for them and we will be there for them. Business knows that putting up Social Insurance 10% is to fund the GHA so that we then need to fund it less through tax. Business knows that if they had been in government their electricity bill would already be 50% higher. Businesses have a longer and better view, and they understand that they will do better in a Gibraltar with a Government with stable public finances than in a Gibraltar where the Government has not got stable public finances.

Of course, nobody wants to pay a penny more – I understand that, we are all human – but if their failure to pay one more penny puts the state in a worse position from which it cannot recover, then the long-term effects for business are worse, in particular in Gibraltar, where the Government, as a client, is one of the most important clients of businesses across the board, and if we cannot spend, those businesses also do not have the opportunity to grow. That is how you deliver a budget for recovery, a budget to stabilise the public finances, and in that way a very good budget for businesses.

I told them at the beginning and I will tell them again: I believe in the Gibraltarian and I believe that the Gibraltarian sees through any attempt to pull the wool over his or her eyes. The Gibraltarian knows what we have done and the Gibraltarian businessman and business woman in particular knows what we have done, knows it was the right thing to do and knows that we now have to pay for it, and they know that the point of arrival cannot have been that bad if we have not put taxation up.

The hon. Gentleman wanted to go to the point of arrival because this was, for him, one of the key things he has been saying since we started COVID. What was the point of arrival? Huge successive budget surpluses, the biggest surpluses in our history and year after year. In other words, at the end of each year we had income that had exceeded our expenses, except for this year. We have grown revenue by 133% since we were elected. That is the point of arrival, and starting from a much higher base than they started, because if you turn one into two it is huge, but if you turn £1.2 billion into £2.6 billion it is even huger.

He said – and this is a typical, this is exactly the thing that he was saying in his press releases in the PDP and the thing that they were saying in 1995, which he wants to say again as if people had not moved on – the GSLP has not returned money to the people. This year we have returned more money to people through the Tax Office than we have ever paid back before in our history, following the OECD recommendations and building on the record the year before. So, how can he say that we have not returned our money to the people? It is nonsense. We have returned to people the money that they overpaid to the Tax Office quicker than ever before.

And let me say that we have increased recurrent expenditure, as if this were a sin. Of course we have increased recurrent expenditure. They increased recurrent expenditure hugely when they were in government, or has he forgotten? Has he forgotten that they arrived when the cost of government was £70 million and they left when the cost of government was £350 million? Has he forgotten that? Look at what they did to expenditure. If expenditure goes up in their time, if expenditure goes up when he is a Minister, it is perfectly proper, it is prudent, it is measured, they have increased services, they have enhanced public sector pay and terms and conditions. If it goes up in my time, it is reckless and lavish, even though expenditure has gone up less in my time than theirs, from £75 million to £350 million in their time, from about £350 million or £400 million when we took over, because in the election year they spent like there was no tomorrow, to about £650 million now. Come on! What is perfectly proper and reasonable in their time that is reckless and lavish in mine? These double standards are typical, but they will be pointed out every single time and I will have them know that the gap between expenditure and revenue is wider in my time than in theirs. That is to say I have always brought in, with this Government, more money as a ratio than I spent, except this year, but as the Hon. Mr Feetham said, 'I accept that nothing you could have done before could have saved you from £158 million deficit.'

540 Mr Speaker, what really was remarkable, what really was something that I never expected to see was the idea that he would be more prudent than us. Has he forgotten that when he went into the General Election in 2011 he was going into the General Election of 2011 promising to reduce tax by 5% in the top band? That, he has forgotten, no? So, I am imprudent, I am reckless, I am lavish. He was going to reduce the top rate of tax by 5%, a reduction of top rate of personal tax to 20%, to put more money in your pocket. 'Gib Election 2011 PDP pledges' – here it is. Does he know how much this would have cost? The cumulative cost of the tax cut that the hon. Member said he was going to give is £120 million, conservatively calculated – £120 million out of the kitty without Mons Calpe Mews, or £120 million out of the kitty without the new Bayside and Westside, or £120 million out of the kitty without any new schools, £120 million out of the kitty without more services, without the growth in the terms and conditions and pay of our public sector, 550 £120 million out of the door to buy Keith some votes. (*Banging on desks*) Thank goodness they were not elected and today the whole deficit is not £278 million, because that is what it would have meant. We would have been deprived of the cumulative value of £120 million of Government revenue without anything to show for it. Even Mr Feetham being generous could not have got up and said, 'Nothing would have changed – you would still have had a hole of £158 million.' Even 555 Mr Feetham would have had to get up and say, 'Look mate, it would have been a hole of £278 million because you tried to win a few votes to get back at Sir Peter in 2011.' That is remarkable.

I am not surprised by his populist approach because of the attitude that he took to Community Care in these past weeks. This is utter populist nonsense that they have been spouting, which they 560 are now already trying to resile from. How can they talk about a legitimate expectation in the context of Community Care? He and Mr Feetham use that terminology. There are both lawyers. Legitimate expectations are things that in law will be enforced when withdrawn because the court will determine that they have to be provided for. There is no charity in the world that has ever been found to have created a legitimate expectation by its giving. Charities do not create 565 legitimate expectations. If the St Vincent de Paul Society tomorrow stopped giving to one of the causes that it gives to, it is not open to an accusation of legitimate expectation.

I have a legitimate expectation, as a member of this community and as his principal political opponent, that when he marches in demonstrations he is indicating support for the thing that he is doing. I would have thought that at least is basic, but he told us here that none of them had 570 signed the petition in support of the Community Care Action Group and the demonstration was to deliver the petition. But what is worse, he told us that he did not know that there was a letter to the Governor. This is worse than irresponsible. This is reckless in the extreme. You could not make this up. This is 'bandwagoning' but without asking where the horse is going or checking whether the wheels are going to come off. Politics 101: do not march behind a letter you have not read, do not support a petition you have not signed. It is absolutely mad. It is another attempt by 575 him to be a political Macavity. He was there in the demonstration to be seen, so that he can garner the support of the people who were there in the Community Care Action Group, but when he comes here, he says, 'I didn't sign the petition, I didn't read the letter, I didn't know what they were there about.' In other words, he did not go for a demonstration, he went for a walk. *Fue de paseo*. It was a stroll. It reminds me of one trade unionist, who I am very fond of, who once went on hunger strike for a few hours. I thought it was more of a diet than a hunger strike. This was a stroll.

585

590 Does he know what he marched behind? This is the letter that he marched behind, the letter that he supported handing over to the Governor:

Dear Sir David  
Copy petition from the Community Care Action Group  
I am the Chairman of the Community Care Action Group, who are a group of men in their late 50s and early 60s.

– how sexist –

Our petition is directed at the Gibraltar Government and at Community Care. The Gibraltar Government

595 – listen to this in the context, in particular, of the history lesson he has had from the Father of the House –

created Community Care, a registered charity funded by the Government of Gibraltar, to operate the Community Officer Allowance and the Household Cost Allowance.

Nonsense! It was not created by the Government of Gibraltar and it was not, at the time it was created independently of the Government of Gibraltar, in keeping with the things that the Father of the House told us, to do anything with anything called the Community Officer Allowance, all of which we know came later.

The Community Officer Allowance is a scheme for Gibraltar-resident men aged 60 to 65 that was created by the GSLP Government

600 – wrong –

in 1988

– wrong –

for the benefit of Gibraltar-resident men in lieu of paying state pension increases to all pensioners.

– wrong –

The Community Officer Scheme has been in existence for over 30 years

– wrong –

and it has been expected practice that 60-year-old men would apply to become a community officer and they would automatically receive the community officer allowance.

605 Wrong again. He marched behind this, Mr Speaker. The Leader of the Opposition marching behind something to the Convent gives the thing an element of political credibility. The Governor, sure, would come out, as a gentleman, to receive the letter that is being delivered to him, but if the Leader of the Opposition is in the crowd of those marching in particular ...

It goes on:

The Household Cost Allowance is a scheme for Gibraltar-resident women aged 60-plus and also for men aged 65-plus that was created by the GSLP Government

– wrong –

in 1988 in lieu of paying state pension

610 – wrong –

increases to all pensioners. In effect, when a pensioner combines their Community Care payments with their state pension, they together form the equivalent of this country's state pension.

Wrong, wrong, wrong – but he marched behind this. If he did not know what it said, shameful, reckless. If he knew what it said, irresponsible, improper.

615 And then, Mr Speaker, it goes on to ask, more or less, that the British government take an interest in this in respect of Community Care, so that it should be paid. The British Government called Community Care a scam. Peter Hain told the Foreign Affairs Committee that it was a scam, and now we have written to the representative of Her Majesty the Queen, so that the British government takes an interest in restoring Community Care, with the Leader of the Opposition marching in support. Of course he averts his eyes and looks down – he should be embarrassed. Of course he should be embarrassed, absolutely embarrassed. Just remarkable.

620 Sir David sent me a copy of that letter, of course, as soon as he received it. These are matters not in the purview of the United Kingdom but of Gibraltar Ministers, and I will happily let him have a copy of the letter.

625 I have made very clear to those representing the Community Care Action Group that I look forward to meeting them to discuss any matters that they wish to discuss, including the Command Paper on equalisation of state pension, if we are able to publish it, as soon as we are able to publish it, but I will not meet them until they withdraw this letter. This letter is scandalous. It is dangerous to the interests of every single Gibraltarian of every generation. It is untrue and it contains materially incorrect facts, which are designed to or inadvertently will mislead the reader. The record and the history of Community Care has never been better set out than by the Father  
630 of the House in this place, in this debate. If a letter was sent by this group to the Governor seeking equalisation by imposition by the United Kingdom and he had marched behind it, the United Kingdom would do to us what they did to themselves: equalise it at 67. Let's be clear. This is the Government that equalised at 67.

635 When he says that we, I, us, the Government are a false dawn, I have to tell him I have met the new dawn that we represent. I have told them before I have met the new dawn that has been born from IVF. I have met and held the new dawn that has been born from surrogacy. Of course we have not done everything we have promised. We are in the process of trying to do everything we have promised. We still have to help people with surrogacy issues that have not been resolved, but we have got very close. The new dawn has a name. The new dawn walks the streets. That is  
640 the reality, and I will continue in the work of delivering not hyperbolic government, hyperactive Government. But to say that we are a false dawn, that we have done nothing, is really to mislead.

What is false is this newfound concern about the Government finances, surely. I told the House in 2019 that I had been negotiating with a lawyer who wanted £400,000 to be Solicitor General. I did not disclose who it was. He was the senior lawyer who was negotiating with me, who said that  
645 it was in the region of £400,000. He cannot be so concerned about public sector pay and the cost of the public sector when he was asking for that sort of salary. No, Mr Speaker, at the time ... He knows that I rate him very highly as a lawyer. I rate all of them very highly as lawyers. I make absolutely no professional complaint against them; my complaints against them are all political and in the cut and thrust of this political debate. But even I thought he was not worth it at  
650 £400,000. He will forgive me for saying that I would have thought it would have been a little too lavish, even for his legal skills, but if I had not thought it lavish he would be sitting behind me now.

And then he says that the delay in Hassan Centenary Terraces cannot be put down to COVID. No, but something else was happening. Has he forgotten Brexit? How the pound slumped against the euro? All of the difficulties that we would have contracting when the Frontier fluidity would  
655 not be clear and whether materials would come in and out? He shakes his head as if to say it is irrelevant. Of course it is irrelevant, because you are sitting in a position where you do not have to care, but if you are going to sign a contract on behalf of the Government of Gibraltar to put the people's money on the line, you have to care. All he is doing with Hassan Centenary Terrace is creating a vicious circle of criticism. So, when he says, in that vicious circle of criticism, that the

660 public sector is out of control – his words; despite not having a Solicitor General at the amount of money he would have wanted to charge, the public sector is out of control – I shall ensure that the regional officer in Unite and the President of the GGCA are aware of his position and the position of the GSD.

665 The public sector is not a gerbil that runs around and is out of control. The public sector is a cadre of working men and women who give their best for Gibraltar. That is the reality. The very same men and women we have praised – not just, but in particular, in the GHA and ERS – for the magnificent work that they have done over the pandemic, the people who kept Gibraltar running when the rest of Gibraltar was shut down, he says are out of control, and the hon. Lady has said similar things, which I shall come to.

670 To then pretend that everything in the Book that we have presented to the House is artificial ... He said these are artificial figures presented today. That is an accusation against the good men and women of the Treasury and the Ministry of Finance, not against me. I do not come up with these numbers, I am given them. I am told what the forecast outturn is. We then look at the estimates and make sure that they are right, so that next year the forecast outturn is close to the estimate that we make this year. They think they come here to say ‘Artificial numbers: *culpa de ellos, del gobierno,*’ the problem of the Government, their fault. No, Mr Speaker, it is an accusation against the good men and women of the Treasury and the Ministry of Finance.

675 If they had been in government, they say, they would have had more financial leeway to borrow, more ability to borrow. This is really remarkable. How can the Leader of the Opposition say that, when Mr Feetham comes to this House and says there would have been no difference in the final deficit position? The final deficit position determines what you would be able to borrow. It is that clear, but he makes no sense. When you scratch below the surface of his mediocre delivery, you find an oasis of inconsistencies like this House has never seen before. That is the reality.

685 He says in his speech that we have to control waste, but Mr Clinton has made very clear what he thinks the waste is. Two books? No, one.

And then he talked about corruption. Well, Mr Speaker, let’s be clear. If there is any evidence of corruption, give us the evidence or give the Police the evidence if he does not want to give it to us. If there is corruption, let’s stamp it out. The hon. Lady has told us that the Anti-Corruption Authority is coming; she has told us it is coming, she has told us all the detail of it. But if you do not want to wait for the Anti-Corruption Authority, go to the Police or get up in this House and use parliamentary privilege to make a statement, so that we know what you are saying, so that it can be investigated.

695 He is pressing us now on the Anti-Corruption Authority. I am just reminded of their press release about mismanagement of building schemes. He accuses us of mismanaging Hassan Centenary Terraces. He was accusing the GSD of mismanaging Waterport Terraces and OEM and all the rest of it, which they did. Pressing for the Anti-Corruption Authority, but when he was leader of the PDP he was saying the direct opposite. We have been proposing the Anti-Corruption Authority since 2011. We are about to deliver it. He has been saying, in 2011, that the Anti-Corruption Authority was a bad thing. The PDP, in their statement of 25th October 2011, published on 26th October 2011, said that the idea of an Anti-Corruption Authority was half baked. Mr Feetham was having a huge go at me at the time, he will recall. They said it would only serve to create alarmist headlines which will undermine the attraction of inward investment of finance centre business by creating the impression that there must be rampant corruption in Gibraltar if there is a need for a special Anti-Corruption Authority. They said it was enough to have the Police. Does he forget this stuff, or doesn’t he care that he contradicts himself so much – because he was also, at the same time, saying that there was corruption but that the Police could handle it?

705 Mr Speaker, I do not need to insult him, I just need to tell the public the truth about him and the things that he has said before, and that is humiliation enough for anyone who has an ounce of shame. He says there is no evidence of cost cutting. If there were the slightest evidence of cost cutting, they would have criticised it as cost cutting. They really are becoming – they are really

unbecoming as the Opposition – in Spain the Partido Popular: unconstructive, just bashing for the sake of it. They have given a speech saying that he is a constructive politician, that he does not do Punch and Judy politics, but then, when he comes here: “poma” punch. What they are saying is cut costs but increase services. That is why he is saying, ‘I support every increased allowance, but I do not support any increased costs.’ And then he says that we think that we do not have to account to people. We came here in March of last year and in September of this year and now we are justifying every penny that we spend, and on COVID we created a special fund so that everybody can see, under the glare of accountability, every figure. But have I admitted that we would have reached 40% of GDP if company borrowing had been included? Is that an admission? I have been telling the House, in September of last year, that we would win the argument in respect of structuring of the public finances, as we have, because of the leeway that we had given, and the idea that we have no repayment plan for the company debt or for the debt of the Government ... We have shown them the repayment plans in detail. We have taken Mr Clinton and others of his colleagues to No. 6 Convent Place and we have explained Eruca and the other structure, gone through them in detail, shown them the repayment plans and how they are completed. Has he forgotten that? I think Mr Clinton may have forgotten, and I will show him all the other things that they have forgotten, but Mr Clinton was sat in my office looking at the charts and how the drawdown happened, how the repayment happened. Has he forgotten that? I explained to them the investment, I explained to them the Eruca structure, I explained all of that.

What is it, Mr Speaker, that is wrong with us continuing to do the things that they did? Well, of course, that he wants to criticise now. What was his attitude to borrowing via companies and renting property, which Mr Clinton now says is borrowing? He managed to do both, or has he forgotten? I went back to his Budget speech of 2003, his last goodbye in those days, talking about his work on health and his relationship with Bernard Linares. He said:

It is my pleasure to continue working on some commercial and financial aspects of the new hospital project.

He was involved in the sale and leaseback and the PFI of the Hospital. At least Mr Feetham has consistently criticised that deal from the first day when he was socialist worker and in the Labour Party. He has never changed his position. Mr Feetham has never changed his position on that. He might have meekly avoided mentioning it whilst he was sitting on this side of the House with the Pyth, but he has never changed his position on that. It is, as Mr Feetham said at the time and as the Father of the House said at the time, the worst deal in the financial history of this community and it has his fingerprints all over it. A deal for the boys, by the way, as well, for the bonuses of banker friends, some banker friends who were very close to them at the time.

So, Mr Feetham and Mr Clinton, who are completely against renting and completely against borrowing and borrowing through companies, and in particular this PFI deal, what do they say to the \$400,000 man next to them about this deal, about the PFI of the Hospital, because it drives a coach and horses through every single argument that they put on debt, on borrowing and on renting. It deprives them of moral authority in every respect and Mr Feetham knows it.

I am being fair to Mr Feetham because he was not in the GSD at the time and he was always against that PFI. He was quiet about it when he was with the GSD in government, but the minute he became party leader he started to bang on about that horrible PFI deal, telling us that he was against it. I am being fair to Mr Clinton, because although I assume he was a supporter of the GSD at the time, and he might even have been a member, he was not a member of the executive and he had no executive responsibility. But Mr Azopardi was in the executive of the party and in the Government executive, in the Cabinet, and he has told us, ‘It is my pleasure to continue working on the commercial and financial aspects of the new hospital.’ So, he is the one in the GSD, or one of the ones in the GSD, who bequeathed us the Hospital PFI, the worst deal in history, bad enough to disqualify him from any legitimate criticism of anything else ever again.

Today, the GSD is represented in this House by the architect, or one of the architects, of that PFI deal. Can he really genuinely tell us that he is against us renting the children’s PCC or the PCC

down at Europort? Can he really tell us that? He was the Minister for Health who rented the ICC building to move the Health Centre out of our building at Casements and into a rented building at the ICC. They did that. So, when we have moved to the new rented PCC we have moved from a building that we owned to a rented building that somebody else owns, we have moved from a  
 765 rented building that somebody owns that they moved us into, to another rented building. Why is it perfect, fantastic, brilliant when they do it, and disgraceful when we do it? Do you think the people of Gibraltar can believe this, Mr Speaker? This is running politics as he was running it by trying to give away £120 million on tax, as if this was a souk; complaining about us managing the public finances and the development of property whilst at the same time they lent their favoured  
 770 developer ... Sorry, that is not fair, one of their favoured developers. They lent one of their favoured developers £7 million or more – OEM – and they lost £7 million with that developer, lost it. Thank goodness the people of Gibraltar had the presence of mind to choose us in 2011, not him, because he would have thrown another £120 million after that with his tax cut and put up electricity by 75% on a diesel-burning power station. He said, ‘Well, Mr Speaker, I have anticipated  
 775 my criticism. We still want the new schools etc.’ Of course they want the new schools, because they do not want to tell people that the policies that they are advocating would mean no new schools. As Mr Isola succinctly put it and as Mr Licudi succinctly put it, they want to run with the hares and hunt with the hounds. They say they want to control spending, but at the same time they want to continue spending.

780 That is why they say that they are going to vote against the Budget, all of the reasons that he gave us: completely the wrong position to take. That is the consequence, however, of us gifting them consequence-free politics. They make decisions with no consequences. They will get a free pass on voting against because they think that we are going to use our in-built Government majority to pass the Budget. In other words, the GSD can do something as irresponsible as vote  
 785 against the Budget because the GSLP Liberals are here to carry the can for them. We are here to be responsible and ensure that everybody is paid. So, after today, given what we have been told by them and by the hon. Lady, it will be clear to everyone that they will be paid thanks to us. It is very simple. If they took the benefit of being able to say that BEAT was paid thanks to all of us because they supported unanimously the measures last year, they have to accept that, therefore,  
 790 the salaries as from 1st August will not be paid thanks to all of us, they will be paid only thanks to us. We will let our nurses, our doctors, our teachers and our technicians know that we will not let them down. We will not let our civil servants and our public servants go without pay and we will not let our pensioners and those who receive other state benefits go without, but they would because they are going to vote against, because he says that we are not transparent enough.  
 795 Doesn’t he understand – he is a clever man – that we provide more information in this book and on the statistics page of the Government than has ever been provided before? Doesn’t he understand that our inability to file all of the company accounts is because we are having to reconstruct many of them because they passed the law that said that companies had to file accounts because the European Union require it, and then they failed – without exempting the  
 800 Government – to file the Government accounts?

Mr Speaker, how disappointing that the attack that I then faced, as he was rounding off his speech with as much gusto as he could muster, was really just an example of somebody begging, borrowing and scraping for a line, because all he did was come here and use a bastardised Aznar  
 805 quote and a bastardised David Cameron quote against Tony Blair. Having had got up there and brazenly, because his pencil took him there as he was writing, called the United Kingdom – our only friend in the world – lethargic, he then lazily relies on somebody else’s line. Remember, this man’s double standards – there are no bounds. Everybody else is lazy, and then, when he borrows somebody else’s line it is fine. We all know that David Cameron said to Tony Blair, ‘You were the future once,’ and then, when he left, Mr Cameron said, ‘I was the future once, now I’m going.’  
 810 Couldn’t he have come up with a line of his own – for £65,000 – to attack me with, just one line so that I might have something novel to respond to? I will give him one: he used to attack them once, now he has re-joined them. Or an even better one: he was never the future, just a useful

prop for Peter Caruana in 1996. His problem is we are still the ones negotiating the future. He was never the future, he is but the past. He is the past returned – like Banquo’s ghost, returned to  
815 haunt this House with memories and recriminations of past elections lost. Something like that, no? Something snazzy. But to just repeat David Cameron’s line shows, as I have shown by going back to all of his old press releases, that he is just a broken record, the same as the PDP, the same as when he was in the GSD Opposition, same old, same old, just repeating now the same things he said when he was PDP leader. But then, as PDP leader, he was saying it of the party that he is  
820 leading now. It is really quite remarkable because it goes on. You can see that he is levelling at me the same things that he levelled at Sir Peter, exactly the same words even, trotting out the same old phrases year after year. He is just a one-trick pony, one year for the PDP against the GSD, another year for the GSD against the GSLP. Zero credibility, a broken record stuck on the same annoying phrase.

825 There is also an element of hypocrisy because now he hates Victoria Keys, but on 4th July 2006 – Mr Clinton would do well to make note of this, because he attacked us for favoured developers etc. – Mr Azopardi issued a statement. The first one was to say that they would create a new town through land reclamation. Sorry, this is 4th October 2006. There was nothing wrong then, but Victoria Keys is a bad thing. He was attacking the GSD on 13th May 2008 for  
830 mismanagement of affordable homes. It is just incredible. All of the same things. And then one of the things he did was he went on television, on Antena 3 in Spain, to criticise the Dr Giraldi Home, just like the Father of the House. Mr Feetham has told us repeatedly in this House that one of the things that disqualifies us from being patriots is that the Father of the House was on that programme. How does he feel about his leader now? All of the things that the *Hansard* will show  
835 he said to Sir Joe about appearing on that programme must surely also stand good for the man who is now his leader. It is remarkable.

And then he was criticising the GSD for putting up electricity by 21%, in his press release of 1st July 2019. He just continues with the same old tired mantras. But the crowning glory of the inconsistencies I see in him comes from their press release of 22nd September 2010. In this one,  
840 he attacks the GSD mercilessly for favouring their favoured developers, or one of them. I had forgotten this one, Mr Speaker, but it was a key find for me because they are attacking us for supporting what they say are our favoured developers. How can that be? How can they attack us for that? We and they were attacking the GSD then for having agreed to jointly develop Midtown with the developers of Midtown, then a much higher Midtown. We reduced Midtown in height,  
845 we reduced Midtown in size and we pulled the Government out of the deal that his party did – the GSD – to support them. And he was criticising them mercilessly. Incredible. And he says that we have favourite developers. You know what they did with this, Mr Speaker? The GSD borrowed using Government companies and using Government buildings as collateral to invest in the Midtown project, and Mr Feetham was a Member of the Government that did that. I assume that  
850 he knew, or it tells us an even bigger story about the GSD Government. So, favoured developers happened in the reign of the GSD. We are not going to hock any Government building, far from it. Favoured developers, who at the same time as this was happening were being given a deal where the remuneration was 1% of a £1 billion contract. That is what Mr Feetham’s Government was doing, that is what the PDP was criticising, that was the party that he now leads getting in bed  
855 with their friendly developers.

Mr Speaker, it is not just *Hansard* that reminds us of everything that happens. The excellent *Panorama* archive also reminds us of everything that has happened in the past. We got the Government out of that deal. We got half of the Midtown plot back. We did not put taxpayers’ money into that development. That is the reality of how we have dealt with the problems that  
860 they left us. And we brought Kings Wharf down a considerable number of storeys. But he attacks us for not doing Hassan Centenary Terraces and then he gets in the way for his criticism of the project that will take the rubble of the rubble mountain that will create Victoria Keys, that will allow us to create the second half of Hassan Centenary Terraces. He wants us to fail, or fail, or fail. He wants to put a block and a criticism in the way of everything that we have to do, to stop us

865 doing the things that he is criticising that we have not done yet. It is completely see-through. That is why it is very clear. When he has a land reclamation plan, it is fine. When we have a land reclamation plan, it is not fine, it is a bad idea.

He was calling on the GSD Government to provide economic leadership. All of the same mantras. The same broken record. But what is the reality, Mr Speaker? He wanted to end with a phrase that said that the Government's public finances were in the ICU. Well, it is a very big ICU because the finances of every government in the world have suffered because of COVID, and as Mr Feetham said, none of the things that they have been recommending for us to do in the last eight years would have changed the fact that we would have had a deficit of £158 million – that is to say that we would be in a difficult situation. The last time the Government of Gibraltar's 875 finances were in the ICU, the last time we had a deficit, was after 2003 because of the spending of the Government of Gibraltar leading up to the election of 2003, and he was a Member of it. He was part of the Cabinet that went on the pre-election splurge of 2003, so his fingerprints are all over the first self-inflicted deficit that we are looking at, not a COVID deficit that even Mr Feetham says we could not have avoided if we had followed all of their advice – that is to say which they 880 could not have avoided – but self-inflicted deficit, his fingerprints all over it.

The public will not be hoodwinked. The GSD think they can hoodwink the general public by saying that we have spent enough but we have not done enough, that we have spent too much but they will not say what it is that they would not have spent on. What is it they would not have done? Refurbish the estates? They would not have built Beach View? They would not have built 885 Mons Calpe? They would not have built the schools, the two comprehensives? The refurbishments of Laguna, Glacis, Moorish Castle and the other estates? The sporting facilities? The shooting club? The new health facilities? The PCC? What is it that they would not do? Of course they will not put their finger on anything. They would not have put up the pay of teachers or they would not have put up the pay of public servants or they would not have increased the terms and conditions? Of 890 course they will not say what they would do, but Mr Feetham at least has accepted that whatever they would have done, they would have been in exactly the same place we would have been in today. He has accepted that, so how, in that context, can he tell us that we are not housing people fast enough? Clever people see through it, and the electorate is predominantly and majoritarily and mostly very clever indeed. I believe in the Gibraltarian, and the Gibraltarian sees through this 895 nonsense.

They say that we are not socialists. Well, if we are not socialists, what have they done as socialists? Spent less on housing, as better socialists than us? Spent less on terms and conditions of employment and salaries, as better socialists than us? Come on, Mr Speaker, this is nonsense. But I know that he is not actually fighting me. I realise that. He is actually fighting them. This is still 900 about the league table on that side, to see who is going to lead them in the next General Election, as I intend to show by the time I have finished with the rest of them. None of them would make better stewards of our economy than we do.

One less green bottle sitting on the wall, so there are six green bottles left perched on the green chairs opposite. The next one I am going to deal with is Mr Clinton. Mr Clinton has been an ally in the past 24 months in many respects, and I want to once again thank him for the work that he has done for us, but of course by that measure he has also been a co-conspirator. Or is it that he can take the benefit of being an ally of ours but pretend that he has no responsibility for the consequent spending that we agreed to do? We then do the spending that we agreed, there is a bottom line and he comes to this House to say it is our fault entirely. That just does not wash. That 910 defence could not even be run by the colonial-era bookkeeper that I used to characterise him as. It just does not wash.

This deficit, because of the spending we have had to do on COVID, has all of our fingerprints on it, as Mr Feetham has, himself, told us, because it is that spending which has led to the deficit that could not have been avoided. We did what we did together – but he has to take the negative of the 'together' as well – for very good reasons: to keep people with income, to keep people with food on the table, to keep businesses afloat so that they would be ready to continue running when 915

we could reopen again. We did a good thing and we did a good thing together, and he should not run from that good thing simply to come here and spin a yarn that we will work with some people who do not think – because most people, you see, Mr Speaker, do think.

920 His speech was, once again, a thoroughly unedifying, thoroughly unconstructive widespread casting of aspersions. ‘I know better than anyone’ is his attitude to all of the approaches that we have had in Budget time; ‘I know better than anyone and the GSD has now been persuaded by me, again, to vote against Budgets.’ That will be his lasting contribution to the jurisprudence of this House, persuading the Opposition, when improperly led by individuals who cannot see  
925 through this, to vote against Budgets in Gibraltar. That is what he has done for them. We should understand what he would do if he ever held the purse strings in Gibraltar, because not spending is not a way to run a country, especially given that he has told us the only waste he has been able to identify is that we have printed the Book twice and we would have saved £1,062.

Mr Speaker, frankly, I need to now address what I will call the Clinton complex. He has  
930 developed a very odd complex. He seems to have lost his sense of what his role is in opposition. In the strictest sense, an Opposition comes here and coerces the Government to do things different by opposition, by nudging, etc. That is what Oppositions do; it is what they are elected to do. It seems to me, perhaps because of the two years that we have spent working together, that Mr Clinton is no longer satisfied with opposing and suggesting things. No, Mr Speaker, if we  
935 do not actually do things that the Hon. Mr Clinton says the way he says them, it is disgraceful, unacceptable and not to be supported because the number might be there but it is on a different page, the number might appear under a different head than he might have seen it, the number may appear in the Gazette, or the number may appear in a company account. If we do not do it the Clinton way, it is the political highway for us. He had better get used to the fact that we are  
940 not going to be doing things the way he says. We are always going to listen to him, genuinely, and if it is right and we have missed something, or if he has a better idea, we will listen to it and we will implement it, but we will not permit him to try and drive the public finances of Gibraltar from opposition, because he has not been elected to do that.

Every time we say no, he gets up in a show of the greatest upset and criticism. For example,  
945 when we sell the berths at the small boats marina, we are flogging them. ‘Flogging’ is a word designed to be pejorative. But when they sell the post-war stock of the Government of Gibraltar, the jewel in the crown – every apartment sold, lost forever, never coming back – it was a masterful step because it was taken by the GSD. I think the only thing they are flogging is the dead horse that is the GSD, let’s be clear.

950 When it comes to rentals, if they move out of the Health Centre at Casements and they rent the ICC, it is perfectly proper, prudent financial management. If we move out of the rental from the ICC to a more modern building next to the Hospital, it is absolutely disgraceful and we are left with a begging bowl. Come on, Mr Speaker!

If they take the borrowing of the Hospital, it is perfectly acceptable and presented as if it is the  
955 best deal in the world by the architect and by the former Chief Minister. Well, Mr Speaker, they started the borrowing, they started the borrowing through companies, they started the PFI, they started the renting. But it is clear to me that if knowing all that he still comes here and delivers the sort of speech that he delivered, it must be because he has not lost his leadership ambitions. Somewhere inside him the little worm is stirring and saying, ‘You could do it, Roy.’ There is no  
960 logic, otherwise, why somebody would come here to say, ‘You should not borrow more, you’ve got your reserve – tap into your reserves,’ whilst at the same time, in the same speech, saying, ‘Don’t allow Community Care to spend its reserve, give it more money; it is disgraceful that you are not giving it more money.’

Well, Mr Speaker, he is wrong on two fronts. Totally contradictory. He said that we were not  
965 giving money to Community Care. I want to go through the chronology of that speech. Listen to what he said. Listen to this gross error from Mr Clinton:

We can see today in the Estimates Book that there is no contribution to Community Care by this Government in the last financial year, which ended in 2020 [...] in fact, we are talking about a two-year period [...] zilch, zero, nothing. Nothing to Community Care in two years, Mr Speaker. Community Care is now having to rely on its reserves, which by my estimation of about £80-odd million would only last four years. And so it is the GSLP that is now running down Community Care's reserves, contrary to their much repeated mantra. Let me say that again: it is the GSLP who are running down Community Care's reserves. [...] what is undeniable is that in this Book for two years, 2019-21, there is no contribution showing, at least from reserves, going to Community Care ...

That is not true, Mr Speaker. That is *not* true. That was either a gross error or a gross attempt to mislead the public. Either way, it is embarrassingly wrong, a dereliction of understanding or a massive attempt to pull the wool over people's eyes on Community Care. The GSLP Liberals are providing the funding. It is there, as I will show.

I then shouted across the floor, because this was too important, Mr Speaker, to leave as it was. I shouted across the floor. It was so bad, so gross, such a dereliction, that I wanted to immediately bring this attention to his mistake. I said from across the floor, 'It's there in the Social Assistance Fund!' He then said this:

other than perhaps somewhere back in the Social Assistance Fund, which is

975 – not a statutory payment –

an amount which is usually £7½ million ... I cannot remember, but there is no contribution [to the] surplus and there is no top-up going to Community Care.

Utter gobbledegook, no contribution to the surplus. This is double nonsense, Mr Speaker. There is no statutory payment to Community Care. There is no statute in respect of Community Care. It is utter gobbledegook. That is why *they* were able to bring it to its knees, the GSD, because there is no statutory payment. If there was a statutory payment, the law would have operated for a payment to be given, but when Mr Azopardi was in government and when Mr Feetham was in government they were bringing down the contributions to Community Care. They brought it to zero. It had no reserves left. A reserve of zero is no reserve at all. What he said was tripe and nonsense, and he is clever enough to know it. Of course there was no contribution *from* the surplus, not *to* the surplus. How can there be a contribution from Community Care *to* the surplus?

980 Nonsense. There is no surplus, for the reason Mr Feetham told us: because of the COVID pandemic, whatever we had done, there would have been a deficit. This is the first year that there is a deficit since their pre-election splurge of 2003. That is why there is no contribution from the surplus, because there is no surplus. But he says there is no top-up going to Community Care. Yes, there is. He is wrong again. He will tell us we were hiding it. Well, we were hiding it in plain sight,

985 in the place where it always is, where it was in their time and in our time, in their Book, which they say gives the full view, even though it is a hundred pages less, and in our Book, which gives the full view but they say gives half the view. On page 453, Social Assistance Fund payments – recurrent payments and contribution from surplus. Of course, it is the recurrent payment, not the contribution from the surplus, because there is no surplus.

995 'Fair point,' he says, and I appreciate that, because he has demonstrated that he is therefore honest in the way that he put his arguments, and I am grateful. He has accepted that he was wrong; I am grateful for that, Mr Speaker, because I will remind the House of how we fund Community Care. We pledge an amount each year to meet Community Care's cost. Over the 2019-21 period we have contributed £15 million – it is there in the Book – and our policy has always been that if there is a surplus, we reverse out the recurrent payment and make a larger contribution from the surplus to Community Care. That is the way that you do a gift to a charity, which is what it is, rather than a contribution to something that is not a charity, which might otherwise then have a linkage between the Government and this very worthy charity.

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1005 If Mr Speaker looks at the column for 2018-19 on that page, the year before the pandemic – it is the same page but the forecast outturn – what we were doing when we did have a surplus, what

it shows is that we gifted £25 million in one year to Community Care. This is £15 million over two years under the recurrent head, not the surplus contribution head. That is the same process as has happened every year before whilst we have been in government. It should come as no surprise that there is no contribution for the surplus, because there is no surplus. That is the top-up that he said was not there.

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Mr Speaker, I think it is important that when we look at the things that the hon. Gentleman says ... This is fundamental. It goes to one of the key points in political dispute in Gibraltar today, because of the issues with Community Care. This was in the Book and he got it wrong, and he has accepted that he has got it wrong, for which I am grateful. He is saying to the Hon. the Father of the House, 'Reduce the reserves of the Savings Bank,' but at the same time saying, 'Don't reduce the reserves of Community Care,' which we could have asked the trustees to do by not giving them the additional amount of the surplus, but we have given them the top-up. I think it is fundamentally important to make this point, because it shows that Mr Clinton says one thing about one reserve and one thing about another, and he says things about the Book which are actually not true. It is not the only figure that he has missed in the Book and that he has complained about, and I will take him to another one later.

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But, at least, now he has accepted that Community Care payments are not in jeopardy – because we have done the top-up etc. – he has also said that the reserves would last Community Care for four and a half years. Well, only because we are in government, because if they had been in government, for the reasons the Hon. the Father of the House gave, which I will deal with in the context of replying to Mr Feetham, already the reserves were zero. This year, with a GSD government, with Community Care and reserves at zero, if we have not been able to give the top-up, the end of Community Care payments completely. That, they have to understand.

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Then the Hon. Mr Clinton attacks me for issues related to the Finance Bill. He keeps telling me that he wants Finance Bills. When I tell him I am going to do something akin to a Finance Bill –

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Mr Speaker, I am advised that I should recess the House for a few minutes because the stream has gone down. I propose that we recess for 15 minutes.

**Mr Speaker:** The House will recess to quarter to one.

*The House recessed at 12.30 p.m.  
and resumed its sitting at 12.45 p.m.*

**Appropriation Bill 2021 –  
Second Reading–  
Debate continued**

1035 **Mr Speaker:** The Hon. the Chief Minister.

**Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I understand that the technical gremlins have now been resolved, but we shall be alive to the fact that they may return, and if the Clerk asks me to stop, I will.

1040 Mr Speaker, I think I was saying that Mr Clinton has asked us for years to think about a Finance Bill. Well, this year we are going to do certain things. We are going to publish today, or tomorrow, depending on Gazette timetabling, all the regulations that are required to give effect to the measures – not all of the measures require amendment to primary legislation – and then we are going to publish the legislation that requires an amendment to a primary Act in the context of the  
1045 next hours or early tomorrow morning, and I propose to certify those Bills as urgent and bring them to the House at the end of Question Time in the normal running order of Bills.

It will not be a Finance Act, because the amendments are required only to the Imports and Exports Act and the Income Tax Act – not to raise taxation but to provide the relief on the allowances. So, I hope he will realise that we have listened to business and we are going to do that  
1050 in order to ensure that they have the certainty that they say they want, but we are not going to do it in the way that he has proposed. I hope he is not, therefore, going to take against us, and I hope that he will be supportive of the Bills we bring. I wonder how they are going to vote, though, in respect of those Bills, because they will be the Bills that give effect to the Budget that they will have voted against. If you are against the Budget, how can you be in favour of the measures? They  
1055 are creating all of these contradictions in the way they have decided, since 2016, to take the approach they are taking.

He says that we beg, borrow and scrape in the way we approach Government. Well, nothing could be further from the truth. Let me explain to him why that is the case. I do not think any Government has spelt out with the amount of precision that we have how we are going to deal  
1060 with our debt. First of all, I remind him again, as I reminded the Hon. Mr Azopardi – who may not have known; I cannot remember when he became leader of the GSD – that when we did two particular packages we invited him to No. 6 Convent Place. We were, as ever when we are not with the cameras rolling, able to cordially enjoy each other's company. We explained all the detail of the investments in question and all of the manner in which we would be dealing with the repayments. He might not agree with it. Nobody says that you have to agree with the repayment  
1065 plan – unless he is saying I have to bring a repayment plan that he agrees. He is saying I have not brought a repayment plan. He knows there is a repayment plan, he knows the detail of it, and here, in the context of this House, I have said already that in the context of the state aid case that he knows that we have pending, where I informed the House that we now have the money in escrow, that we would apply any recovery from the state aid case – which would be an extraordinary amount that would come in – to the repayment of debt. I have said that already, Mr Speaker. Additionally, I said in my speech on Monday that if we have extraordinary sales of land, we will also apply them to the repayment of debt. I do accept that this may not be a repayment plan that he agrees with, but his point in his speech was not that I was not bringing a  
1070 repayment plan that he found agreeable, he was saying that there is no repayment plan whatsoever. I really think that that is unfair.

I have also said in this House that we would look at how we deal with the issue of the guarantee over three years, whether we might extend that, whether or not we might take a different view and whether or not we might repackage that amount in a different way that might deliver the advantage of the low rates that we have in respect of the borrowing. Frankly, I think we have done  
1080 our level best, but it is also true that we do not know whether we are out of this yet. We all hope that Gibraltar's high vaccination rates mean that we are out of it. There are different views as to

1085 what happens in the autumn and the winter, and the boosters and not the boosters, but we may  
actually have to spend more before we crystallise the amount that COVID has cost us. I think that  
is important to understand. The deficit might not be £50 million. The deficit might be more next  
1090 year if we have an extraordinary situation after the autumn, where we have to spend more on  
BEAT etc., but, frankly, I think we have the best professional advice with the Financial Secretary  
and the teams that he leads and the professionals who advise us generally, and I really do think  
we have done an extraordinarily good job in the context of dealing with debt in the light of this  
pandemic. Again, I have to remind him that his former leader, Mr Feetham, said specifically in this  
House, alongside his statements on waste, that there was no way, whatever we might have done,  
even if we had followed their advice – that is to say even if we had acted like a GSD government  
would have acted – that we could have avoided that deficit. That is fundamental.

1095 Mr Speaker, after those initial points that he made I really think that his speech started to  
deteriorate and was not even of the quality that he has in the past sometimes shown us. It soon  
started to become ‘Carry on Clinton’, but without the intern.

1100 Mr Speaker, I know that they do not like us to reply to them in ways that point out all of the  
things that are wrong with what they say, but for somebody to come to this House and say that  
we are going round with a begging bowl on behalf of this community, borrowing and scraping, is  
really very pejorative because he is a respected member of this community and a respected  
Member of this House and people will listen to what he says – and people will, unfortunately, then  
realise, when I reply, that the things he has said are not correct. But I do have to deal with them,  
because he is somebody we respect and the public respect. Mr Speaker, the only begging bowl I  
can see is the one where he is saying to me, after my replies to him in many Budget speeches  
1105 already, ‘Please, sir, can I have some more?’ and I am going to give him some more, because the  
facts will make very uncomfortable reading for him in the context of the things that he has said.

1110 First of all, I want to deal with the issue of the Barclays Bank loan renewal. I want to remind  
him of what he got wrong in the context of the Barclays Bank loan renewal. He told us during the  
course of his speech that he was concerned that Barclays would not renew our £50 million of  
borrowing, but he must have forgotten – just like he did not spot the Community Care payment –  
that I told him repeatedly through to 2019 and 2020 that we had received offers from Barclays to  
renew the whole of their facility, but we had turned *them* down because we found their terms  
unattractive; we could find better terms. On 30th May 2019 – it is there in the *Hansard*, at line  
2517. The Father of the House says to him:

Barclays has indicated that they are willing to renew the facility that matures in October.

1115 In his Budget speech of 2019, the last Budget speech he gave before today, he acknowledged  
that. He said this, not me:

I was pleased to hear from Sir Joe in answer to Questions that Barclays have indicated that they will consider  
renewing the [facility]

How can he then say he was concerned that they did not renew the facility?

1120 I told him, and the Father of the House told him, that we preferred not to do it with Barclays  
Bank because by doing it with Barclays Bank, on terms which were not as good as the terms we  
could get elsewhere, or indeed from the Savings Bank, we were giving away the interest charge  
to Barclays Bank, who had left Gibraltar, instead of giving the interest charge to the people of  
Gibraltar to be in the reserve of the Savings Fund. This was explained, specifically in the context  
of the importance of that rainy day fund and how it grows, to him at line 80 of the *Hansard* for  
19th December 2019. Then, on pages 9, 10 and 11, Sir Joe and he have a constant to and fro about  
1125 this. They are talking about all of this detail. I will give him the copies if he does not want to look  
it up himself. In February 2020, just before COVID hit, he got the answer again. On page 34 of the  
*Hansard* for February 2020, at line 1495, Sir Joe specifically tells him they offered to renew and  
we turned them down because we could get better terms. How can he be worried about the fact

1130 that Barclays did not renew, unless he wants us to do it with Barclays because he has an arrangement with them, or a friendship with them, which I doubt he has, and he prefers that Barclays get the interest than the people of Gibraltar in the Savings Bank on better terms?

1135 It actually makes no sense, but I really think that having heard from Sir Joe that it is not that Barclays did not have the appetite for us, it is that we did not have the appetite for Barclays, he can pretend for one moment to conject an argument of concern because we did not renew with Barclays. Another very serious mistake. This man has been the manager of a bank. He is highly regarded in this community and he is highly regarded in the finance centre, and he comes here and says in this Parliament, 'I am concerned that Barclays did not renew the facility.' Immediately that has to spark off concern, until you do all the work that I have had to do to show that he has been told not that Barclays would not renew the facility, that they wanted to renew facility, 1140 therefore no issue to concern yourself about, but that we decided not to renew it with Barclays because we wanted to keep the interest in Gibraltar. He has to understand that when he makes remarks we have to reply, because if we do not reply in detail, showing that he is wrong, it can cause a problem to the public finances of Gibraltar.

1145 He could not see a contribution to Community Care, which is in the Book. He has accepted he was wrong. He could not remember that Barclays had been prepared to renew the facility but we did not want to renew it with them. What else couldn't he see? All of this failure to see what is there, what he has been told and what he has forgotten, might make the idea that he sells to the people of Gibraltar – that we have hidden debt – something that we have to investigate. I have told him before all of the detail of the Eruca structure etc. It would have been remarkable, for me, 1150 if I did not know that he had got it wrong on Community Care, he had got it wrong on Barclays and he had got it wrong on Eruca and the other arrangements, for him to have got up in this House and said, as he did, that there are no sausages in Morrisons. Mr Speaker, I have the photograph to show that last week, when he was on his feet saying there were no sausages at Morrisons – I will send it to him – the shelves at Morrisons were *full* of sausages. (*Laughter*) They were all there, 1155 hiding in plain sight alongside the renewal by Barclays and the money to Community Care, all of it. He is just no longer able to dominate the debate with these statements, which are wrong, because we go behind them and we are able to show that his theories and even his eyes deceive him.

1160 Indeed, Mr Speaker, as I move on from the great British banger, it is incredible that Mr Clinton, the Shadow Member for Public Finances, gets up and says, 'We don't know what you're doing with your money,' and at the same time, in the same debate, the Hon. Mr Feetham, who really led the debate for the Opposition again, gets up and enumerates exactly what we have spent the money on. He says, 'You spent £750 million on A, B, C, D, E, F and G.' Why don't they just go and have a chat? He who says that he does not know where we are spending the money could have a chat with he who says that we have spent the money in order to win elections, and they could do 1165 and the reconciliation that Mr Clinton is not prepared to do, even though the buildings, the schools – everything that he complains about – the new Health Centre etc., is all hiding, like the sausages in the Morrisons fridge, in plain sight. It is so clear, Mr Speaker. They urge us to spend less, but then they complain that we are not doing Chatham and we are not doing Bob Peliza because we are having to move things around. 1170

1175 Mr Speaker, is it that things only happen for Mr Clinton if they are here, so an affordable home has only been built and can be lived in if it is on page 16, head 15, 'Other charges' point 6? There are the affordable homes. If it is not here, it does not exist. Mons Calpe Mews is not there, Beach View Terraces is not there, Bayside and Westside Schools are not there – because they are not here. Our children are not enjoying the benefit of it because they are not in the right place in the right book, where Mr Clinton says. Of course they are there. They are just like the sausages he could not find. I will happily take him by the hand through the Book as I go, as I will take him through the sausage isle at Morrisons, Mr Speaker.

1180 Why does he complain that we are going to create Victoria Keys? His current putative leader, Mr Azopardi, is chastising us just like he used to chastise the GSD, using exactly the same

terminology for not having yet started to build Hassan Centenary Terraces phase 2. To build Hassan Centenary Terraces phase 2 we have to remove the rubble mountain to Victoria Keys. He does not want us to do Victoria Keys. What would he rather we do? We have to use the rubble mountain for Victoria Keys and for Caisson for the Marina. Otherwise, we have to pay to take the rubble – which in Gibraltar has a value because you can create land with it – to Spain. Is that what he would prefer? We are not favouring developers, we are favouring the people of Gibraltar and the economic growth of Gibraltar by creating land with the spoil which will make way for Hassan Centenary Terraces. He has to see this, Mr Speaker, he has to open his eyes, he has to look beyond the sausage and see what is happening.

All of these things are things that we turn into a positive. In other words, the problem of the spoil, which, by the way, is not spoil that we put there ... It used to be a reclamation, which started under the first GSLP administration, which was called a rat-infested pit by the GSD when they were elected, and no sooner did they leave Government that it was Sovereign Bay, which was the same mountain that we are dealing with now. So, they are again trying to set up obstacles and criticisms to prevent us from doing the things they say that we must do, but we turn that problem into an opportunity and we create a new reclamation for our people. And what do they say? They go round turning people against it, saying this is just favouring developers. *They* favoured developers, Mr Speaker, by giving them the deal to do Midtown and investing with borrowed Government money. We are not doing that. We are ensuring that we can move the jigsaw puzzle that is Gibraltar, to ensure that we can build Victoria Keys, we can build Hassan Centenary Terraces and we can build Chatham and Bob Peliza. But, of course, we need somewhere to put the spoil of Westside when we demolish it. Does he think we should pay to take that spoil to Spain, or create Victoria Keys? All of these things have to be done and they have to be done at a particular time. They criticise us for not having done certain things, but none of them – and I will deal with this more in the context of Mr Bossino’s speech – have congratulated us for building St Martin’s, none of them. They do not say, ‘Look, I accept that you have built St Martin’s,’ they say, ‘You haven’t yet started the demolition of Westside in order to do Chatham Counterguard,’ etc. There is one person holding out there still. We will not be blackmailed. We will make sure we pay the right amount to the person holding out, but we will build these homes for the people of Gibraltar.

Mr Speaker, the other thing that he says is a problem is that we are growing Government rents by 3% a year. Well, he might care to tell the many people who have taken a mortgage in Gibraltar in the last 30 years that growing Government rents by 3% a year for Government properties is somehow wrong. They were urging us to put Government rents up, until we put Government rents up. The minute we put Government rents up they started to think it was a bad idea. What are we doing by putting Government rents up in the way we are doing? Protecting people by making sure that we do so once we have refurbished estates – which we have done, a vast majority of them, and we will continue doing – and not hitting working people, protecting working people, because the rent has gone up the price of a beer. Let’s put these things in context. These outrageous rises that they rail against ... It is the price of a beer, and, frankly, if they do not support us in raising the rent of the Government housing stock by the price of a beer a year, they do not understand what it is they are saying, because they are telling us to ensure that we protect the public finances and give them stability, and they are saying that we should keep the rents as they were. Even with the 3% rises a year, the rate of inflation of 2016 – in other words, from the last increase in Government rentals in 1984, to 2016, which was the first time we raised it, that rate of inflation, the 1984 to 2016 rate of inflation – will not be reached until 2040. That is how much we have protected working people, and if any working person believes that they would have protected them more, good luck. They just need to look at what they did on electricity – raise it by 21% – and what they were preparing to do with electricity, which was to raise it another 75%.

His numbers are all wrong. He says we have reduced the Principal Auditor by 10%. In fact, we have added £200,000 to the budget of the Principal Auditor this year. We have added – *(Interjection)* The staffing? Ah, Mr Speaker, the staffing. Doesn’t he know that there are 19 people in the complement of the Principal Auditor today, and there were 17 when they were in

1235 government? An estimate of £777,000 in 2011-12 is now £1.3 million and a 168% increase in the contribution to the Office of the Principal Auditor, and inflation in that period has been 18%, a 150% above-inflation increase in the investment in the Office of the Principal Auditor and two more people since they were last there.

1240 And the only favoured developers we have seen are the Midtown developers who have their borrowing of taxpayers' money with a company and hocking Government property like the Haven etc. to invest in Midtown, and *their* loan to OEM. So, when he talks about favoured developers, what does he think of what the GSD did, losing £7 million to Barclays Bank over OEM? What does he think of that? How can he accuse us of favouring developers when they are the ones who favoured developers and lost money with them, or borrowed money in a Government company hocking Government property? Beg and borrow and what else? And even Mr Azopardi was criticising them at the time.

1245 All of that, and he said that the only waste was the publishing of the second Book. It is clear that he has not even looked at the second Book, because we are not hiding the £50 million that he asked about. It is there. He did not want to look and find the £50 million in the new Book. Instead, he wanted to make this point. It is far more effective for him to come to this House and say what this implies is that 'there is an increase in the Sinking Fund to £75.5 million. I would  
1250 appreciate if the Chief Minister in his reply would explain where this extra £55.5 million in the Sinking Fund is expected to come from, as it is really not evident from the information in the Estimates Book.' He did not look at the new Book. It is obvious. That is why he thinks it is a waste, because he did not bother looking at it. He did not bother looking at it, but if we had not printed it he would have said, 'This is disgraceful, we are now going to deal with Ministers under the new  
1255 arrangements after the reshuffle, and I cannot go through this in the Book as I want to.' He either did not look, or again he did not spot it.

Mr Speaker, the thing that really shocked me the most, and I wondered whether the Roy Clinton I had worked with in the period of the pandemic had simply disappeared, was his attempt – as I can characterise it in no other way – to persuade people not to give charitable  
1260 donations for public purposes. What he is trying to do in this House is speak against donations in such a way as to tarnish the fact that somebody may make a donation from a charity to the Government, that is brought in in such a way that those who might make it will not proceed with it. It is on his own conscience if we do not receive the donations. It was very sad and very disappointing to see him behave in that way, in particular in the context of the theatre.

1265 Has he forgotten the name John Mackintosh, even though this House is in John Mackintosh Square? Has he forgotten that the theatre we have today is the John Mackintosh Theatre, built by a charitable donation? Why is he urging me to spend £50 million of taxpayers' money, that we do not have, to build a theatre, instead of encouraging that people should give, so that we can have a new theatre which is based on donations?

1270 He seems to have forgotten the history of this very building. He does not want anybody to give anything charitable for this building. Does he, of all people, who prides himself on knowing his history, forget that this building was built by 160 merchants coming together to raise funds for the Exchange and Commercial Library, that the foundation stone was laid in 1817 and that it was founded and built by voluntary subscriptions and opened the following year? This was the civilian  
1275 response with people's donations, voluntary subscriptions, against the exclusive Garrison Library, because Gibraltarians, no matter how wealthy or eminent, were excluded from that. This building was born from private funding and voluntary submissions. How can he now object to the Parasol Foundation, which has its headquarters opposite, wanting to make a contribution to the lift, and now, because they are not going to have the lift on the outside, to the external refurbishment?

1280 The Deputy Chief Minister briefed the Leader of the Opposition, the hon. Lady and Mr Bossino on these things. What is wrong with a generous contribution in the public interest? The Government thanks, on behalf of the people of Gibraltar, all of the charitable foundations and all of the entities that donate to public purposes. Why was he so surprised by the Parasol Foundation being involved in the Mount? We said in two press releases, in December 2019 and in September

1285 2019, that there would be philanthropic donations for it. There was no COVID pandemic then. We  
have not had to get the begging bowl out because of the COVID pandemic, but he has forgotten.  
Just like he forgot about Barclays, he has forgotten about the Parasol Foundation and the  
philanthropic donations that we announced. He must be very careful that he does not spook  
1290 people because of the attitude that he takes, because that would be a loss to the good people of  
Gibraltar and the opportunities that we have with that.

There was no problem, of course, when the Parasol Foundation made donations when they  
were in Government; that was perfectly proper and appropriate when they were donating, across  
the board, £1.3 million to the Alameda Gardens. Okay, that is not the Government, but they were  
making other donations. They are making donations for public buildings, for the Victoria and  
1295 Albert Museum in the UK, where the Parasol Foundation gave £800,000, and £170,000 to the  
Heritage of London Trust for Public Buildings and the maintenance of public buildings. Or the  
Cosuma Foundation, when they were in government, that gave £35,000 to replace hospital  
ventilators and paid for the redevelopment of Europa, which they then photographed and put in  
their manifesto, although *el Jardinero* had designed it. Why was it fine for Cosuma to donate to  
1300 their project at Europa, but it is not fine for Trusted Novus to donate to Midtown Park? Why was  
it fine for Cosuma to donate to Commonwealth Park, but it is not fine for Trusted Novus to donate  
to Midtown Park? Of course it is magnificent, but their double standards are not magnificent. That  
is what is self-evident.

He really is an armchair general. In the context of the Anti-Corruption Authority – which I have  
1305 already dealt with because of the other flip-flopping by the Leader of the Opposition now and the  
GSD, who took the anti-Anti-Corruption Authority attitude before – it is ungenerous for them to  
take the attitude that they have taken. The Hon. the Minister for Justice has told us we have  
published, through our Ministry for Justice, 300 pieces of legislation just on COVID in the past year  
and a bit. You have to understand that we have not been able to progress things in every regard  
1310 as we might have wanted to, but has he not seen those 300 pieces of legislation either? Were they  
hiding behind the sausages, or behind the £15 million donation to Community Care, or behind the  
*Hansard* of the Barclays Bank evidence that I have shown him, which he had before? Everything is  
there, hiding in plain sight, but he cannot see it.

I was surprised when he got up to read me the part of the Constitution that deals with  
1315 supplementary expenditure, very surprised, for a simple reason. He got up to read it, again with  
gusto. He read it aloud, but the bit that he wanted was not there. There is no time by which the  
Bills have to be published or passed, and there is no convention or rule that the Bills have to be  
published or passed in a particular time, is there? (**Hon. R M Clinton:** Logic.) Logic. Okay. Thank  
you, Mr Speaker. From a sedentary position, Mr Clinton has said that it is logic that suggests that  
1320 the Supplementary Appropriation Bills have to be published by a particular time or passed by a  
particular time. He has not told us what that particular time is.

So, let me tell him what he might not be aware of, and let me remind him that he is sitting  
there with blue and yellow colours as a Member of the GSD. They did not even publish, let alone  
pass – we have published, we have not passed – Supplementary Appropriation Bills in 1997, 1998  
1325 or 1999. The Supplementary Appropriation Bills for each of those financial years were published  
in the year 2000. They published three years late. Ours are at least published immediately. They  
did not even publish. Where was their logic then? They then moved to a situation where they  
published a year late. In other words, they did not publish in the year, they published a year late.  
We have only been delayed since 2016, because something happened that got in the way. It got  
1330 in the way of monthly meetings, it got in the way of everything that we were doing. It is called  
Brexit. I know he says that we use it as an excuse. It is not an excuse, it is a reality, but what he  
says is our heinous sin, that we publish Supplementary Appropriation Bills and we do not pass  
them ... Their heinous sin was cardinal, they did not even publish the Supplementary  
Appropriation Bills, and he cannot pretend he does not know it, because if he is going to get up in  
1335 this House and don his dagger to come at me in relation to Supplementary Appropriation Bills, he

should at least check the information. Or does he not have the information? He does not have it? No, of course he does not have it, because he is lazy.

1340 The minute he made the point, I went on the Gibraltar Laws website. I punched in 'Supplementary Appropriation Bills'. I went through all of them. They all carry the date the Bill was published and the date the Bill was passed. But he wanted to come to this House to say that the Government was acting unconstitutionally. He did not have the clause that says by when we should publish, so he has said that we are acting against the logic of the Constitution, without checking that the party that he represents had committed not the sin that we had committed, of publishing them but not passing them because of the difficulties that we have had. They had not  
1345 even published them.

Then he said, 'And then what happens if you have a dissolution?' and that it would be dreadful. Didn't he check – of course he did not – that they did exactly the same thing? They published their Supplementary Appropriation Bill but did not pass it in 2011, and we did. We passed their Supplementary Appropriation Bill for the year 2010-11 in the year 2012 for them. That is what  
1350 happens if you have a dissolution in between. All of the questions that he said he could not answer, the answers are hiding in plain sight from a fibre-optic cable away of the chair in which he sits in his study to write these speeches, but he is too lazy. Just like the sausage he could not see, he could not see the answer to this question. But of course there is a difference, isn't there, from him suggesting that we are acting unconstitutionally – of course it is us who must be acting  
1355 disgracefully and unconstitutionally – and something they did, because when they did it, everything was hunky-dory and perfectly proper. It was prudent, responsible financial management. I cannot imitate anybody as well as my friend, the Father of the House, so I will not even try.

What happened in 2012? The Government of the GSLP Liberals passed the supplementary appropriation of the Government of the GSD, even though, ironically, most of the money they had spent, they had spent trying to defeat us in the election. You know why we could do it, Mr Speaker, without blushing? For a simple reason: we had never fallen for the track of voting against a GSD Budget. If we had voted against the Budget in June/July 2011 – or indeed the year before, 2010-11 – and we were called upon to then pass the supplementary appropriation for that Budget,  
1360 it would have been very difficult indeed. But we do not have that difficulty because we do not fall into the utter foolishness of voting against a Budget, and therefore they would have a problem of their own making.

Mr Speaker, at the end of the day the reality is that I have been able to demonstrate that he was a strong ally of ours during COVID when we worked together with him, but he has got spooked  
1370 when he has seen the numbers. He is trying to run for the hills to avoid the consequence of the spending that he agreed and approved. As Mr Feetham told him, the argument about the point of arrival is irrelevant because, whatever the point of arrival, we would have had a £158 million deficit. I am prepared to take the responsibility on my own, with my Government colleagues, for that spending, because it was the right thing to do, but that deficit has his fingerprints on it, just like it has mine, and everybody needs to understand that. We did it for the right reasons and I again praise him for it. Disappointed though I am in the way that he has behaved in this Budget, I praise him for the way that he behaved last year because we did it to put food on the table, to keep businesses open, and we did it without discrimination. We had to act urgently in March 2020. He gave us advice that we took to heart and we made some changes based on what he said, but I  
1380 am happy that it is my responsibility and that it will carry my imprimatur of being the leader of the Government who, with my Cabinet colleagues, voted in Cabinet to make the spending, came here, brought the Bills and passed them with their support.

He has demonstrated that whilst accountants are supposed to be all substance over form, he is just form over substance. That is why he is persuading them to vote against the Budget. He is  
1385 persuading them to vote not to pay the vaccine administrators, not to pay the teachers, not to pay the civil servants, not to pay the firemen and the police, not to pay every single public servant, not to provide every single public service that we provide. That is what his vote is and what he has

1390 persuaded all of the others to do. In the same way as I will give him credit for every payment of  
 BEAT that we did, because they voted with us, I will now make sure that everybody understands  
 that if they deserved the credit for that, they do not deserve credit for every item of salary paid  
 going forward.

1395 He got it wrong in his reasoning in many things that he told this House. He got it wrong on  
 Community Care, he got it wrong on the financing of the Barclays facility, he has got it wrong on  
 the Constitution and supplementary appropriations, he has got it wrong on favouring developers  
 because they are the ones who favoured them in the Midtown development and OEM, and he  
 attacked on all of the issues where actually, when you analyse what they were saying, they were  
 wrong, even on the availability of sausages at Morrisons. He cannot see what is in front of him.  
 He is not Mr Guru, he is Mr Magoo. That is the reality. Another bottle that falls by dint of its own  
 hubris.

1400 Mr Speaker, let's move now to another green bottle. When Mr Feetham got up, the House  
 was, as ever, electrified. The ego had landed. He is undoubtedly the best they have, but our people  
 do not want him. All the things that he got up to complain about were all the things that we had  
 done. Of course, all the things that we had done had to be wrong – except in 2011, when he was  
 not the leader and they did not produce a pamphlet, they produced a full manifesto, all of the  
 1405 things that we said we were going to do were in their manifesto too. They were going to build  
 affordable homes. They were going to build new schools. They were going to refurbish the housing  
 estates. If he was advising us not to do those things, what is he saying about the credibility of GSD  
 manifestos? He was telling us not to do the things that were in the GSD manifesto for the self-  
 same life of the Parliament that he was telling us not to do them. It does not bear analysis unless  
 1410 you go back to the same old GSD frequency on medium wave and you hear Peter Caruana being  
 interviewed in the 2011 General Election campaign by Gerald Duma, then head of radio. Sir Peter  
 says, 'Well, look ...' After hearing that masterful imitation, I cannot imitate him as well. Sir Peter  
 said, 'Our manifesto is a wish list. It is not a commitment, it is a wish list.' Well, if Mr Feetham was  
 telling us that there was credibility in him telling us that we should not do the things that we did  
 1415 between 2011 and 2015, he was telling us that they would not have done them, despite the fact  
 that they were in their manifesto. So, when you go to the 'souk' that they refer to, you get a  
 product from the GSLP Liberals which is intended to be delivered and a product from the GSD that  
 is a wish list. Incredible, Mr Speaker, but anyway, at least, although he titled his contribution the  
 'I told you so' Budget speech, it was actually gutted by the reference that I have made to him  
 1420 accepting – because he had to accept it – that of course we would have reached the same  
 endgame in the same year, £158 million deficit, full stop. In that context, people can judge was it  
 right for us not to have followed his advice or was it wrong. If we had followed his advice, we  
 would now be in a situation of £158 million deficit without the schools, without the new homes  
 etc. I think people would say, on balance, well done Gibraltar for choosing the GSLP Liberals and  
 1425 well done Government and Chief Minister for having delivered all of those things and still reaching  
 the same place, as the Hon. Mr Feetham said.

It was clear that he delivered his speech like an alternative Leader of the Opposition's speech.  
 This was really the speech for the Opposition. He got up to say he was not just responding to the  
 people he shadows, he was responding to me as well – except of course their leader had got up  
 1430 to respond to me the minute I had sat down and their Shadow Member for Public Finance had  
 already responded to me. He was behaving like the independent Member for Labour, Mr Speaker.  
 I assume it is because he must have remembered that the Hon. Mr Azopardi was in favour of free  
 association independence and doing a deal that makes us a colony of the European Union, and he  
 wanted to put as much blue water between him and them as soon as possible.

1435 But this alternative Leader of the Opposition speech at least had the fire, which I could see the  
 minute he praised Mr Azopardi. The minute he killed him with faint praise, I knew he was going  
 for him. Incredible. *(Interjection)* When Daniel Feetham says you are eloquent, be careful, because  
 it is coming. He said it with the glint in his eye that he has and with his usual mean and hungry  
 look, just a little bit too mean and a little bit too hungry. That is why people do not like him.

1440 You do not win three elections without doing some good, he said. He said it as praise, and I am grateful and I acknowledge it, but of course that is entirely contradictory to the thing he was telling me I should have done, because the things he told me I should not have done are the good things that he is reflecting I have done. So, you do not win three elections without doing good things, yes – build homes, build schools, increase salaries, all the things he told us not to do. I just cannot  
 1445 get my head round how this Cabinet team has to deal with the sort of lack of logic that we are hearing from Members opposite. And then to deliver a speech in this, the most serious of all years, which was like a pantomime – ‘I told you so,’ ‘Oh, no, you didn’t,’ ‘Oh, yes, you did’; come on, Mr Speaker – to end up in the place where he had to end up, which was accepting that we would have ended up in exactly the same place, as he said more eloquently than anybody else on that  
 1450 side and even more eloquently than I could put it.

He says that his strongest criticism of us is that we cannot manage. Well, at least we manage to beat them every time, so we do not manage so badly. What is clear to me is that he is really just trying to seek vindication in his speech. He is trying to say, ‘You see, I was right in 2012 and 2013.’ I am starting to confuse who Banquo is. There are so many ghosts coming at me from the  
 1455 other side that I forget who is Banquo and who is Duncan here. It is really quite remarkable. He is just trying to show us that he will fulfil his destiny. He might have forgotten, but he told a publication in Gibraltar once that his most treasured possession was a brooch, or something, that he has, written in Aramaic, that says, ‘Set your people free.’ I remember that, in Aramaic. He should get on a translator. I think that brooch says, ‘Set yourself free and let go.’

1460 He says that we have no strategy and we have no plan, but the tactics that succeed are ours, no? At least we can demonstrate that we have not done the things that we complained about. How does he sit now with the person who did the PFI deal that he has spoken against all that time? He has admitted that it was his, in the context of the last thing that he said in this House in 2003. What was the point of him being the ‘Grinch’ that he referred to and reminding us of that  
 1465 in particular, reminding us that he had said that we should not do that spending, to then tell us that we would have ended up in the same place anyway? It is just politically mad. How can he say that we are not giving information? We have more information than ever.

What has become very apparent to me is that the hon. Gentleman simply cannot get over 2003, 2011, 2015 or indeed 2019. I think he might still be having a problem getting over 2002, and  
 1470 what I think he wants to do is jump into the DeLorean with the Hon. Mr Clinton as the nutty professor and go back and win all those elections that were lost – back to the future, back to the past election. And then what? To come here and tell us – as Chief Minister, because he has rewritten time – to stand up, do everything differently and say, ‘We have a loss of £158 million anyway’? There is no point. Let it go. Get a life. You lost the £7 million with OEM, not us.

1475 As for who started the culture of entitlement, at least the hon. Lady had one part of the speech which I can agree with. Who got rid of tax on pensions? Who removed the means test for many of the services that the Government provides? Who got rid of the GBC licence fee? Who got rid of the road tax? There was a GSD Government after the famous 2003 General Election where a number of those things had been proposed and they all clapped themselves up, saying they had  
 1480 neither sold themselves nor bought themselves – and then they did all those things. Who started the culture of entitlement? Come on, Mr Speaker. We have to have a serious debate. The hon. Gentleman complains now about Social Insurance increasing, but he sat here and supported Social Insurance increasing by the same amounts year on year. He voted for it then; he does not vote for it now. We voted for it then because we voted for their Budgets. It is just remarkable. You could  
 1485 not make this up. It is not serious. You could not make this up.

But the hon. Gentleman was absolutely bang on point and brilliant, not just in his delivery but also in the substance of the points that he made in the context of the European Union mandate. I thank him, genuinely, for making clear his belief – which I assume was on behalf of his Opposition colleagues, because he said that Mr Azopardi had asked him to reply – that nobody on this side of  
 1490 the House would ever do a deal that involved a concession. I warmly welcome his recognition of that fact. We will never, never, never accept any part of the EU Commission’s mandate which

1495 involves any concession on the part of the Government of Gibraltar in respect of any part of any  
square millimetre of the land of Gibraltar, and neither will we accept any condition which makes  
it harder for business in Gibraltar to prosper and create prosperity for Gibraltarians first, and those  
around us second – never. I really acknowledge the way that the hon. Gentleman changed his  
1500 tone to address that part of the speech, because I think on this issue we need to be more united  
than ever. I am very happy to continue to involve them and continue to involve him in our  
briefings, which the Deputy Chief Minister has been doing religiously. This Government will never,  
ever accept any capitulation. Of course, we all want modern systems for pragmatic, safe and  
secure solutions going forward, and that is what we will continue to work on, but we will never  
accept that what our forefathers fought for should be lost now, not on my watch. That is my  
message to everyone who is listening, and I accept his olive branch in respect of this issue. I think  
Gibraltar is united on that.

1505 He said that UK future trade deals do not apply automatically to Gibraltar. Well, they do; there  
just need to be adjustment periods for Gibraltar, because Gibraltar needs to sometimes change  
its legislation, and we have to ensure that we have made changes to our legislation there. I am  
quite happy to brief him separately, with the Deputy Chief Minister, on those future trade deals  
and how they apply – the new trade deals, not just the renewal trade deals.

1510 Frankly, what I found in the context of his intervention on the Treaty was that, for once, I heard  
a glimmer of what I had heard the Father of the House say to Sir Peter in 2002 when he had said  
to him – Sir Joe to Sir Peter – ‘Before they get to you, they have to get through me.’ He did not  
express it in quite that way, but I felt that there was a unity of purpose on behalf of Gibraltar  
between us and at least him on those issues.

1515 Where we have no unity of purpose is on the issue of Community Care. I have to tell him that  
when he asked me to disassociate the Government from the things that Joe Bossano had said, he  
was wrong to even raise the possibility that that might happen. Joe Bossano gave more than a  
master class on the history of Community Care. I think he set down on the record every aspect of  
the history of Community Care that needs to be on the record, including the considerations of the  
Government as to what it would do when they were in government, whether it would continue  
1520 to fund Community Care, for which they had brought the reserves off to zero, or whether it would  
decide to do something else. That is what the papers that Joe Bossano was referring to show. They  
do not draw a link with Community Care that is not there. We have just had a discussion about  
how we make the contribution, and his Government – because he was a Minister at the time –  
was having considerations of not even giving them the top-up, leaving them at zero so they had  
1525 nothing left to give, and doing something else on their own. That is what he said.

1530 So, far from disassociating myself from Sir Joe, I praise him for the excellent analysis that he  
has brought to the House, for the commitment that he has shown and, indeed, for his dedication.  
As he demonstrated when he started and he was talking about his age, at 82 years old it is  
remarkable to have the benefit that we have of Joe Bossano still coming to this Parliament, giving  
us the value and the depth of his understanding. I am so pleased that he has put that on the record  
now, in *Hansard*, in respect of Community Care, because now we have, for posterity, all of that  
history, which was not there before. Even when individuals disagree with him ... And Joe Bossano  
has never required that to be in a party with him you have to accept everything he says; he actually  
1535 asks you to challenge him so that we can have a debate and reach a better conclusion. But even  
when you disagree with him – and I am looking in particular at the Hon. Mr Bossino and the hon.  
Lady, who is not here at the moment – he is worthy of the respect of a man who has given 50 years  
to Gibraltar in this place.

1540 He is the one who has made millionaires of many Gibraltarians by selling them affordable  
homes for £30,000 that are now worth hundreds of thousands of pounds, and by, on top of that,  
paying some of them commutations of many hundreds of thousands of pounds. This is the man  
who has made millionaires of many of the people who now complain because he has a different  
view than them in respect of Community Care.

I was saying that the hon. Lady should also have that respect for him. The hon. Lady's father is the father of the Gibraltarians and nobody can take that title away from him. She knows that I have the utmost respect and love for her father, but Joe Bossano is certainly the guardian of the Gibraltarians and the guardian of Gibraltar for so many years, and he deserves the respect that goes with that. That is why Her Majesty recognised him with KCMG, and that is why the people of Gibraltar recognised him unanimously in this place with the Freedom of the City of Gibraltar, so I am not going to disassociate the Government from the things that Joe Bossano said, I am going to double down on everything that Joe Bossano said because it is absolutely right and long overdue that it should be said.

Mr Speaker, when the hon. Gentleman also said that no one on that side had signed the petition, all they wanted was full consultation and a moratorium on the changes that Community Care had made, I wondered what it was that he was saying in this debate, because none of us here are trustees or directors of Community Care. Was he addressing the senior partner of his law firm, James Levy, who is the trustee of the trust? I do not understand.

The concept of legitimate expectation, as he knows, does not apply to a charity, but I think I detected in all of them the embarrassment of a U-turn on this subject, because I think it is very clear now that they will not be backing the aims and objectives of the Community Care Action Group. I think they have now made that abundantly clear – I think the hon. Lady has also made that abundantly clear – and that their position is not what it might have been pretended by them to be, or what they might have intended that others might think it was.

On the issue of the equalisation of the pensionable age, we are very clear. We do not need a Canepa commission for that, Mr Speaker. We have already said we have manifesto commitments on it, but we have said that we want to re-found the scheme in order to be able to deal with, and we have already said that we are going to issue a Command Paper, so I do not understand what he was asking for when he was saying we should create a Canepa-style commission.

Mr Speaker, I warned the Hon. the Leader of the Opposition and I warned Mr Phillips as well: 'Careful when Daniel Feetham praises you. If he says that you have fire in your belly, get yourself a fire extinguisher as soon as you can, because you do not know how it is going to end.' Look at what happened the last time I trusted him.

Mr Speaker, what a pleasure to be reminded of the things I used to do when I was 28 years old. We had a very good time in those days. We were firm friends. I will always be sorry that he chose the wrong path. But what sad days also, because Clive Golt, the editor of the *New People*, and the *New People* itself while Mr Azopardi was in government, was excluded from No. 6 Convent Place – censorship against a particular newspaper in Gibraltar. Those were the bad old days of the GSD.

I do not think anybody could ever forget Peter the Python. I do not think Peter Caruana did not know who Peter the Python was. I would like to think he knew that the wit had to be mine, and I assumed that after 2003, whilst he was sitting alongside him in the executive, in 2007, here, he had gone from being one of the people who inspired some of those articles to sitting next to the Python, so I guess the python knew. No? Well, if he did not know that, he knows now.

I had forgotten about the *Socialist Worker*, but the excellent job that the Deputy Chief Minister and his officials do with the Government archive means that it is all readily available.

1585 **Hon. D A Feetham:** I gave you the in.

**Hon. Chief Minister:** He is absolutely right, Mr Speaker, he gave me the in, because he does not think, when he does things, that he opens at 30 flanks. That is the problem if he is ever Chief Minister of Gibraltar. He might go to a meeting and say something and open 30 flanks, and then what?

1590 What about *Socialist Worker*? It is a long time ago, Mr Speaker. He is neither a socialist nor a worker anymore, but what would *Socialist Worker* say at that time? All that *Socialist Worker* did, anonymously, was praise a guy called Daniel Feetham. Listen to this:

A genuine socialist alternative to Caruana's GSD was what was desperately needed and the emergence of Daniel Feetham's Labour Party has been welcomed throughout our society. Feetham's working-class background and upbringing has served him well, and if his parties rapidly growing stature continues at its present rate, the electorate will at least have a credible alternative to the GSD at next General Election.

1595 Praising Daniel Feetham – but now we know it was him! I should have known it was him, because  
it says 'parties', not 'party's'. He was giving away that he had gone from the GSLP to the Labour  
Party and was soon to go to the GSD. Parties: many more than one. Except there is something in  
this which shows that the hon. lady was telling us the truth. If you read this and go back to *Hansard*  
and look at what Michael Bane wrote at the time, we were told that Michael Bane was actually  
1600 the pen name, or the usurped social media identity of Daniel Feetham, and it is identical. Los unico  
que falta es que disi que guapo. It really is quite remarkable. *Touché* to the hon. Lady. In that  
particular duel, she won. *Y por la boca muere el pez*. Everyone had forgotten about the *Socialist  
Worker*, it was buried in the archives, but, for the sake of having one quick dig at me on the Python,  
he opened that flank too. But I generously welcome the annual.

1605 Mr Speaker, for disclosing that I am the Python, for disclosing that I wrote Peter the Python,  
he is not the political Messiah, he is a very naughty boy, but it does not matter, because it was  
20 years ago. The one thing that he will have achieved with that is that by the end of this debate  
they will have what they have wanted all of their lifetimes, and some of them have had but not  
the others: they will all have a Ministry, because by the time I have finished with them today they  
will all be Members of the Ministry of Funny Walks.

1610 It is no secret, however, that at the same time as we were writing stuff like this, others had  
been writing really quite disgraceful stuff, in something called *The Gibraltarian*, that had  
compared my good friend to Josef Mengele. Remember that? That was not satire of the sort of  
the Python, in fun and in gest. It was not even him praising himself. I am not blaming him for this.  
(*Interjection*) In *The Gibraltarian*, in the run up to 1996, some were comparing people to Nazis.  
1615 That was nasty, nasty, nasty.

1620 Anyway, Mr Speaker, the end of his address was absolutely magnificent. He was on fire. I just  
want to know whether he does children's parties now and whether he has an agent, because he  
really was absolutely magnificent. He always brings out the best in me when I have to deal with  
his contribution, even though it is based principally on a false premise, but then with the key point  
that even if we had followed his advice, even if we had done everything that they say we should  
have done, we still would have ended up at exactly the same point, but without the schools etc. I  
am sorry, though, that my last statement to him is going to be to say that I think he is an excellent  
orator but he should always seek to read somebody else's speech, because the errors of logic that  
1625 he made out of his frustration of having lost in 2011, 2015 and 2019 are ones that I think he will  
realise he will be paying for, for many years, as I remind them that this year they agree, in his  
mouth, that we would have ended up in the same place.

1630 I thank him for being very generous to our Health Services, in particular to the hon. Lady and  
to the hon. Gentleman for Public Health, and for having indicated just how well things have  
worked, in particular on testing in Gibraltar – although they will be greatly disparaged by  
Mr Phillips, but I will deal with that later.

1635 Mr Speaker, Mr Bossino's speech was a speech of two halves. My reply will also be a reply of  
two halves. The first thing that our putative friend did across the floor of the House was attack  
Mr Daryanani on a statistical point, just to make the point – I think he needed to make the point  
and remind everyone – that he came first. He did not come first in the Opposition ranking; she  
came first in the Opposition ranking, the hon. Lady. He came top of their six, so he did not come  
top of the pile in the Opposition. I would always rather be with the Hon. Mr Daryanani, the last of  
the top 10, and not the first of the bottom of the three teams. The hon. Gentleman has to bear  
that in mind with his hubris of trying to remind people that he was first in the GSD, because the  
GSD came last in this election – the GSLP and the Liberals first together, Together Gibraltar second,

1640 and the GSD third, although you got more people in. But in terms of the rankings, they came after her.

On the issue of special needs ... and I want to reflect the fact that I appreciated how emotional this issue was for him; I know how difficult it was for him to get through it. It was very difficult for me to hear and I hope he knows that he has the support of Members on this side of the House, as  
1645 does anyone, Member of this House or not, who is going through that difficult period.

The hon. Lady and I see a lot of people who have difficulties with autism. The point is this, Mr Speaker: we are not pretending that this is a utopia and that things are perfect. We know that they are not. In fact, they may never be able to be perfect. This may not be an area where perfection is possible, but there is deep commitment.

1650 He is sitting here with the GSD. If he is being honest – and I have no doubt that he will want to be – he will accept that things which are not perfect today are much better than they were before, under the GSD. I am told that my predecessor as Chief Minister saw no one in the area of disability. I see everyone who wants to see me in the area of disability and I have built a lot of strong friendships in the area of parents with children with disabilities and people and children with  
1655 disabilities, who I consider to be friends.

I really do think that the hon. Gentleman needs to look at what Mr Feetham said in their press release of last December, where he said:

We do recognise that much had been done for disabled people over the last decade,

– that is a good place to start; we do not believe that there is utopia –

but the work needs to continue to ensure that people with disabilities can enjoy enhanced opportunities and the best possible quality of life.

We are 100% *ad idem* on that, Mr Speaker, so what I am going to propose to him is that we  
1660 should do something unusual and we should do it together. I am going to propose to him that we try to depoliticise this issue completely, because I think the people who need our help here do not deserve our politicisation of this issue, like we politicise and make partisan everything else we do. I am going to propose that we establish a select committee. I am going to propose that it should be chaired by me and by him. I am going to propose that it should include Minister Sacramento  
1665 and Minister Cortes, the Minister for Equality and Health and the Minister for Education. I am going to propose that the Leader of the Opposition should propose somebody else from the GSD for that, and I am going to propose that the hon. Lady form part of it. It is going to be the first select committee in the history of this House that has an even number of Opposition and Government Members, because I want us to try and do something different in this space.

1670 Mr Speaker, let me deal with the other points I have to deal with in respect of the hon. Gentleman. The abortion referendum is behind us now. The law is in effect. There is no constituency for the sort of position that the hon. Gentleman took in this House and outside it. He needs to really tell us whether he accepts that, or not.

The hon. Gentleman postulates himself recently, in a publication outside of this place, as  
1675 someone who wants to take over the leadership of his party. His party is the second party in Gibraltar politics after us at this time, and the pendulum may swing between us. Is he telling us that he accepts the result of the abortion referendum, the result of the surrogacy law that we passed in this House, the result of the equality between men and women to enter into marriage under our law? Or is he telling us, as he told us when he was talking about surrogacy, that he will  
1680 never accept it? If he never accepts it and he becomes the leader of Government business in this House, he will have to move to undo all of those reforms, and he will find me in his way, either in this place or outside this place. He has to be honest about this.

He is not the great pretender or the former Leader of the Opposition, we have been through all of those; he is the great procrastinator. We all, who know him, know that he is a great  
1685 procrastinator. But if he is going for the job, is he telling us that he is going to change all of those

things in keeping with his beliefs? Or is he telling us that his political beliefs are different to his human, religious and other beliefs because he told us with great firmness that he would not vote in favour of something?

1690 As leader of the GSD and Chief Minister of Gibraltar, if they were to win a General Election, surely he has to have a position. I *really* will not be able to agree to give him a bye on these issues. I think the community deserves to know, and quickly, whether he is abandoning his beliefs or whether he will see through his beliefs and make the necessary changes to our laws, if he ever has the ability to move and promote that sort of Bill in this place. I am going to be asking him that constantly in this House for the next two years, in the run-up to the next General Election and  
1695 through the next General Election, because that is a key issue, and if he is not the leader after this election but after the next election, I will still be hounding him, whether I am here or whether I am not.

1700 Mr Speaker, I found it really quite remarkable that having seen him on Spanish television, on 31st December or 1st January, rejoicing outside the Rock Hotel with his lovely wife, then about the New Years Eve agreement to come here and hear him – in what I hope was a moment where his tongue got the better of him – call me a blob. But I am starting to wonder whether this is something that we need to look out for him also, because the newspaper that I am referring to – which inadvertently, in the most amusing spelling mistake in history, called him ‘Demon’ Bossino, he will recall – said that he was getting ready to get on a white charger and wield Excalibur. That  
1705 is what it said, that he was going to wield Excalibur. Well, if you are going to wield Excalibur, you need to tell us what you think. You need to tell us whether, really, you are against the referendum on abortion, which he chastised the hon. Lady for not accepting whilst in fact he was representing the party where I showed him the then parliamentary Leader of the Opposition had said that the policy of the GSD in July 2019 was that they should have an open referendum on the issue of  
1710 abortion. So, it is very difficult to see where it is that ‘Demon’ Bossino would fall on these issues.

Certainly, one thing that I thought has been a remarkably unfair episode in the way that Mr Bossino has approached his politics has been the Volotea issue, and I put it to him that if he had been the Minister for Tourism he would have acted entirely in keeping with the way Minister Daryanani acted. He would have said the same things. He would have given Volotea, at their  
1715 request, the same quote we gave them. That is what he would have done. If he is real in his friendship with Mr Daryanani, if he is not posturing or pretending for political purposes, he will want to reflect on how ungenerous he has been in the context of that episode, and he will want to reflect and, with his conscience, consider whether or not, in fact, he would not have acted in exactly the same way if Volotea had knocked on his door, said that they wanted to fly to Gibraltar and asked him for a quote.  
1720

I am starting to wonder, however, whether he is doing his homework these days. He and I had a very good debate, about 33 years ago – which I won – about whether or not the 1969 Constitution should be amended. He will remember that it was to show us how to debate, and we were both told, ‘You debate this, and you debate that.’ What we believed did not matter. We  
1725 were given five minutes to prepare. He lost because he had not read the Constitution that we were supposed to debate. I am starting to wonder whether nothing has changed. Just like Mr Clinton and the others, he came to this place and he said this:

I think a further wider point to make in this context is that we need a new Gibraltar Development Plan – and, if I am not mistaken, indeed the Development Plan is from 1991. Time flies by when you are having a good time, it is 20 years ago. The Government promised it but has not yet delivered. We need one which is fit for our requirements now, not 20 years ago.

1730 Nineteen ninety one is 30 years ago, not 20. That one he could have done with his pencil, right? Second, if it had been 20 years ago, we would not have been the ones promising it and not doing it, because we were not in government 20 years ago; we have been in government for 10 years. If it takes another 20 years, I certainly will not be in government, that is for sure, but I hope the GSLP will still be here with the Liberal Party.

Let's get to the facts. The last development plan was in 2009, 20 years, almost, after the date that he suggests, and it is not hidden anywhere. They have their mobile communications devices on them, Mr Speaker. If they just want to type into Google 'Gibraltar development plan', before they finish the word 'plan', in glorious pdf they will be offered the 2009 development plan, a GSD development plan. We said that we need one a decade later, 2019. Something happened in 2019, a cliff-edge Brexit and COVID. That is why we do not have one now. We have also had this debate in this House, so I am surprised that he fell into this trap, but there was an extraordinary lack of preparation there from the hon. Gentleman – extraordinary.

This is basic. It is just like sausages at Morrisons. This is basic stuff. Because of the respect that I have for the House and for hon. Members, I spent weeks preparing my submission with the support of all the officials of the Treasury and the Ministry of Finance – weeks, Mr Speaker. This weekend I have done nothing other than prepare to respond to hon. Members because of the respect that I have for them and their contributions – even though I disparage them in replying to them – and the respect that I have for the House. This is a basic mistake. You cannot be spending the time that you need to be spending for the salary that you are paid by the people of Gibraltar if you get something as basic as this wrong, and if you are saying not just that you are fit to be a Member of this House ... The hon. Gentleman is telling us that he is fit to lead his party and to lead this House and this community. You cannot make mistakes like that. You have to put in the extra hours. You either have the work ethic to do it, or you cannot do it because of your circumstances or whatever, but do not postulate yourself as the answer if you are not prepared to do the work that you need to do. This is hard work. It is not a walk in the park. It is not just 'I would like to be Chief Minister because I want my name on a plaque.' This is hard work, the hardest work that I have ever done, and I have worked hard before in my life – the hardest, Mr Speaker.

It is unfortunate that, perhaps as a prop for that purpose, the hon. Gentleman thought that one of the things he had to do was besmirch the reputation of the Father of the House. The hon. Gentleman and the Father of the House are seeking to persuade the rest of us to fund them on a visit to the Holy Land, so that they can walk the road to Damascus together and find out what on earth is happened there and come back and give us one version, rather than the many that we are hearing.

The Hon. Mr Bossino knows that I like to refer to the Father of the House sometimes as Joda, as an allegory to the oracle in the *Star Wars* films, because I feel particularly drawn to the 'force' in the *Star Wars* films. But given the number of times I have seen him attack a man he used to think was the bee's knees and the solution to every issue that Gibraltar had when we were teenagers, I am starting to become persuaded that whilst I might want to call him Joda, I might want to call *him* Judas, because I have not seen such a turn on someone as I see with him and Joe Bossano. It is really unfortunate and I would urge him to consider the things I was saying before and the respect that we all owe the Father of the House for the contribution he has given – now 50 years in this House next June.

It really does say something, Mr Speaker, about the dynamics on the other side of this place that Mr Feetham reached the zenith of his oratorical skills and held the Parliament in his hand, like he had never held it before, the day he came here to tell us the story of Slim Shady. That was the best moment I have seen Daniel Feetham deliver, but it was hardly the moment of greatest unity in the GSD, was it? Slim Shady is not what I say of him. It was his stablemate's think of his tactics to take over the leadership of the GSD.

And so, on those issues where he has had such a low regard for the way that he has referred to the contribution of the Father of the House on the relationship with his stablemates, all of those things make me think that actually, despite our personal relationship, I do not think he is somebody who would be a fit person to lead this community. I always am very careful not to say who is fit and who is not, because I was told I was not fit in June and I became Chief Minister in December, and I hope I have demonstrated my fitness for the job. But the key issue for me is this: if the hon. Gentleman is anti-gay, if he is anti-surrogacy and he is anti-abortion, then he is just telling us that he is anti-everything and pro-nothing, because these things are key in our modern

1785 world, and he is going to cast himself into the role of the Viktor Orbán of Gibraltar, and that would not be a good place for him to be.

I hope he realises that he has miscalculated on that and that he tells us genuinely that he will not touch those laws. If he can reconcile that with his conscience and his beliefs, I think that would be much better for Gibraltar. I do not know whether it is possible to reconcile that with your conscience and your beliefs, given that you need, under the rulings, to do what you can to stop these things, and if you are here you could do what you can to stop these things, but I will leave it to him to examine his conscience. I know him. I know he is not a bad person, but his words and his actions can hurt people and people can find that their lives are tremendously upset by the inability to marry the person they love or to have their children registered in their name, something that we are still fixing and making better. In other countries, the sort of rhetoric he gave us in the context of the surrogacy issue leads not because the people who say those things want it, but it gives licence to others, who are then sometimes violent. I know that that is not what he would want to see, anyone taking his words to defend or to excuse.

Mr Speaker, I am conscious of the time, so I am going to finish dealing with Mr Bossino and then seek a short adjournment to come back and continue, but I have to tell him that on this side of the House what we stand for is love of all shades, not prejudice for those who are not like us. We stand for real equality, not for covert discrimination, as he told us is his position. I stand for the freedom of a woman to choose, not for the obligation of a woman to give birth, whatever circumstances she may find herself in. We are on opposite sides of the debate on personal freedom and equality. We seek to liberate, he would seek to force, and we will not be able to agree to allow him to forget that. This is an issue on which we have to be honest and he has to tell the community what he would do if he had the opportunity. Mr Bossino, I would say to you, if I could talk to you directly and not through the Chair – Mr Speaker – it is no longer 1921, it is 2021.

Mr Speaker, finally, I would say this. Mr Bossino made one particular argument in the context of the to-ing and fro-ing, which I jotted down during our Question Times. He asked me how I could be using Peter Caruana as a lawyer when I disagreed with him politically. Well, that gives away the same old GSD. I will get him the quote. It is in the *Hansard*. He was trying to show that the GSD must be very good and Sir Peter must be very good if I was using him as a lawyer; I must therefore adopt all of Peter Caruana's politics. I roundly disagree. When we instruct a professional, we instruct them because of the professional value that they bring to an instruction, not because of their political beliefs. We do not ask them their political beliefs, but that was the position under the GSD after 1996. People who did not share their political beliefs did not get the opportunity to be instructed, and he gave away that he is in exactly the same place as Sir Peter was on that, which is wrong. In the end, Mr Speaker, if I may say so with respect to him, his contribution when emotional was excellent, when professional was deeply flawed.

Mr Speaker, I need to go on through a lot of the rest of the detail that hon. Members took us through. I think it is important that I put all of the rebuttals from the Government on the record and I do not want to do so by labouring you and the Clerk, who have not been able to move in the last few hours. I would therefore propose that we return at quarter past three and I can then continue with my reply.

**Mr Speaker:** The House will now recess to quarter past three.

*The House recessed at 2.10 p.m.  
and resumed its sitting at 3.26 p.m.*

**Appropriation Bill 2021 –  
Second Reading –  
Debate continued**

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

1830 **Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo):** Mr Speaker, thank you. I hope Members have been able to use the time to nourish themselves, so that we can continue dealing with the feast of an Appropriation reply.

I had just finished dealing with the Hon. Mr Bossino – one green bottle less sliding off the wall. There are three bottles left on the opposite benches. I want to start, now, dealing with the  
1835 contribution made by the hon. the former parliamentary Leader of the Opposition, the PLOP.

‘Carry on Elliott’ has almost a naval feel to it, and I do not mean navel-gazing; I mean naval as in Elliott, Trafalgar, Nelson, etc. ‘Carry on Elliot’ almost has a gubernatorial feel, and I sometimes feel that the hon. Gentleman ... The way that he speaks to us, I think he feels that his role is to come and govern us, to tell us how to govern. So, whilst he was here in this place calling the Hon.  
1840 ‘Mr Environment’ – also the Minister for the Environment, aka *el Jardinero* – a pussycat, a hundred environmental scientists had been working with the Minister for the Environment, hearing this environmental lion roar. That is incredible, because it shows us, almost in the context of the prodigal son, that some people do not appreciate the value that the Hon. the Minister for the Environment brings to Gibraltar – at least those who do not understand the environment, like  
1845 Mr Phillips – because people who are genuinely involved in seeking the protection of the environment, who work with us in Government, whom we worked with in Opposition, may sometimes disagree with us in the context of what we do – in the main, they agree with us – but they never doubt the commitment to the environment of this Government, the commitment to the environment of the Minister for the Environment, or, indeed, the expertise of the Minister for  
1850 the Environment, even when they might genuinely disagree, which is perfectly normal. The hon. Gentleman, however, suggests that the Minister for the Environment is less than the expert that he is.

I do understand that the Hon. Mr Phillips is the sort of politician who has never let a bandwagon go past knowingly without seeking to jump on board. That is why I thought Mr Daryanani, when  
1855 he came up with the ‘bandwagoneering’ phrase earlier in this debate, might have been thinking about him. It was Mr Phillips, after all, who had led for the GSD on the anti-Line Wall Road issue, despite, of course, the fact that I have indicated to the House earlier that the Hon. the Leader of the Opposition had indicated his personal support for it, although Mr Phillips then said it was the worst thing in the world, and the fact that the person who topped the Opposition poll had that  
1860 policy in their manifesto.

I do not know whether Mr Phillips, keen runner that he is – and, I say, from a position of jealousy, accomplished runner that he is – is against the closure of Line Wall Road, despite having  
been the most vociferous proponent of Line Wall Road not being closed, because after the performance that I saw Mr Phillips put in here at the last meeting of July 2019 on the issue of the  
1865 referendum on abortion and the Crimes (Amendment) Act, where he spoke impassionedly against abortion and the proposal that we were putting – yes, I have gone back and read it; there is no point in shaking your head, because I go back and I read stuff – I do not know that I can any longer ever believe any of the things that he says in this House, however impassioned his submissions may be. He may simply be able to argue any brief, like a good barrister, but he was sent here to  
1870 argue a brief that was obviously the opposite of what he then told us was his personal belief. So, frankly, he will forgive me for wondering whether actually he was against the closure of Line Wall Road.

The main theme of what he told us about the environment was that we lacked ambition. He said that the Government and the Minister for the Environment lacked ambition. Well,  
1875 Mr Speaker, just you wait until you see our Climate Change Strategy. Then the attack will be that

we are too ambitious. Typical! They will accuse us of not doing enough, and then they will accuse us of doing too much, and Mr Phillips will not even blush in the process. When I saw him being interviewed on GBC on his personal view on abortion, which was completely different to what he said in this House, he did not blush. So, I am not surprised if when, during the course of this year, we publish our Climate Change Agenda – and it is incredibly ambitious – he does not even blush when he comes and says it is too ambitious in this House.

At the moment, he seems to be obsessed. The current hobby horse is Midtown Park. He calls that the concrete triangle. It is a quadrilateral, isn't it? He cannot even get that right, can he? Mr Speaker, all of us have children, and those of us who do love to see our children work out their shapes. Mr Phillips cannot even work out his shapes. But when he is attacking us on Midtown Park, when he is attacking us on Midtown and the concrete jungle that he says is there, does he know that the party he represents in this House had a smaller Midtown Park and a larger Midtown development, and higher Kings Wharf towers, all three of them? That is the party that he represents in this House, the party that he is sitting with. He is attacking us for a concrete jungle when what we did was reduce the amount of concrete that was possible for the developers that they favoured to lay at Midtown. That is the reality. So, he accuses us of the thing that actually they were responsible for.

He complained about the cost of the Midtown Park. Again, another one who seems to be desirous of not seeing the public purse alleviated or ameliorated by the costs of the park by the very generous donation that is proposed by Trusted Novus Bank, which was, by the way, an unsolicited donation, I will have him know – an unsolicited donation, a surprise. You would have thought that he was doing that from the comfort of the historic position of representing a political party that has either never developed parks and therefore has the comfort of being able to say, 'They can't make me blush on the cost of a park, because I have never developed one,' – not a good position to be in, if you are pretending to be a champion of the environment, but at least you know defensible – or a party that has developed larger parks that have cost less. If the hon. Gentleman represented a party that had built parks bigger than Midtown, that cost less than Midtown, on the attack, Chop Suey, you would have done whatever damage you needed to have done. But if you represent a party that, in respect of the only park I can think of that they developed, paid multiples for less, you would not want to expose yourself to ridicule by attacking this side of the House. Does he know which park I am referring to? Blank stares back.

We really do need to have cameras that show you the faces of Members of the Opposition during this debate, Mr Speaker; otherwise, it is not so much fun for people watching, because they cannot see their faces. If you come to this House and you do not know the political and financial history of Gibraltar, you expose yourself, as you do now. Or has he forgotten that one of the things they told us they were going to do in 2007 was that they were going to build a magnificent Theatre Royal – yes, that old chestnut – and that in fact we do not have a Theatre Royal today, but they bought the building, contrary to the advice that they had at the time as to the ability of the building to continue to be used, and the land, for £10 million, and on that land, which cost £10 million, they then spent an additional £2.5 million-plus to develop the park? The 'plus' is the car park that is underneath, but if you exclude the cost of the car park and you are left just with the area of the park and the Theatre Royal, the GSD's park, where the Theatre Royal used to be and their new theatre never materialised, cost in excess of £12 million, and it is, I think, a third of the size of Midtown Park.

I know, Mr Speaker, that he has to quickly think of something to save his embarrassment, and whisper to the Leader of the Opposition, but let that just sink in: a smaller park for multiples of the millions of pounds that they have attacked us for spending. I can imagine why they were so disappointed when I announced the fact that there was an unsolicited donation proposed to the Government. It is remarkable. And anyway, if he is so committed to the environment and so ambitious for the environment, you would have expected him to say, 'Well, look, it is expensive, but I support that there is a park there instead of what the GSD was going to do there, which was to bring the Midtown project to be even larger and closer to the centre. Well done to the

1930 Government that I disagree with on other matters, for lowering the height of the Midtown development, for pushing the Midtown development back and for taking half of it back and being able to do the car park on the other side.’ That is not favouring developers. What this Government did was stand up to their favoured developers, to get land back for the people and to get the money that they had favoured the developers with, back into Government coffers. That is the reality.

1935 I assume he does recognise the benefits of parks and that at the end of the day he will think this is a very good thing. I hope that in his personal life he does not allow this huge faux pas and embarrassment, which he has caused himself in relation to Midtown Park, to prevent him from actually spending time in that magnificent quadrilateral, and perhaps even listening to music and having a cup of coffee.

1940 Does he know, in attacking us for wanting the concrete jungle and not a greener Gibraltar, that in the area where the Commonwealth Park is today they had a plan, too? Yes, the people that they represent in this House, the Gibraltar Social Democrats. They had a plan, too. The Hon. Mr Bossino stood for election in 2011, if my memory does not fail me. I spent four very convivial years with him here, initially. Does he know what their plan was for there? Three more towers, Mr Speaker. And what is the attitude of the GSD to Commonwealth Park? To challenge it, to say 1945 it was a bad thing. Champions of the environment? No, Mr Speaker, chomping at the bit to attack us at any opportunity but not champions of the environment, let’s be clear.

1950 So, every time he utters the words ‘concrete jungle’ again in this House he should follow it by saying, ‘concrete jungle, which the GSLP Liberals stopped and ameliorated and the party that I represent was perpetuating’. That is the concrete jungle that he should be talking about, and if he wants to talk about Victoria Keys being bad for the environment, he would like to ask perhaps the current Leader of the Opposition how he was going to do his new town on reclaimed land without causing the same environmental concerns that he is raising, that any reclamation would now have. Well, Mr Speaker, frankly – (*Interjection*) Oh, unless it was one on the Eastside, which pushes Eastern Beach out to Ceuta and Melilla. Yes, that one I seem to recall, which then had the tram 1955 running through it, which would have been affordable despite giving them a £120 million tax cut. That is the one, Mr Speaker, the one that Warner Brothers featured recently in *Space Jam*, the new movie starring Bugs Bunny, because these are things you can only think of in your imagination. You cannot seriously come to a parliament and defend these things, whilst at the same time attacking us for spending too much.

1960 So, every time he says ‘concrete jungle’ he should either wash his mouth out with political soap and water, or he should say ‘concrete jungle that the GSLP Liberals stopped’, because the Gibraltar Social Democrats were going to build three more towers where the Commonwealth Park was, were going to permit the Midtown development to include a tower – which would have gone, I think, 30 storeys up – and were going to permit the Kings Wharf developments to be double the 1965 height they were going to be. Yes, Mr Speaker, we sat together with the developer and said, ‘We are not going to accept this. The highest point now is Kings Wharf and you come down from there to the height of the Sails,’ or whatever it is that is in the Cormorant Wharf. That is what we did, that is what we represent. So every time he says ‘concrete jungle’, he should say ‘which the GSLP Liberals stopped and which the GSD were going to perpetuate’.

1970 And he need not worry, because if he does not say it, we will, to remind him, because what we do not want is people outside of this House to be duped by the Gibraltar Social Democrats into thinking that they are somehow not the Gibraltar Social Democrats. If they want to call themselves the PDP, they can stand for whatever. We will remind Mr Azopardi of the things that he did in Government, but then they are the PDP. But if they want to call themselves the Gibraltar Social 1975 Democrats, it comes with the good and the bad.

Has the GSLP done everything right in government? Well, Mr Speaker, obviously not. Probably since 2011 we have made more mistakes than we made between 1988 and 1996. Obviously not, because we are manned by human beings. But if they are not going to at least accept the things that they were doing which were wrong, by at least accepting that in the area of Midtown, the

1980 area for which they are attacking us, they were going to do worse, then they have absolutely no moral authority to be able to lecture us.

When it comes to air quality, he says the hon. Gentleman is painting a false, rosy picture. Again, has he forgotten who he is sitting with? Is the air quality what we would want it to be? Not yet. Is it moving in the right direction? Of course it is, the principle reason for that having got rid of three  
 1985 diesel power stations and now having, instead, an LNG power station. That is good for the pollution but not so good for the climate change issue, but at least, in terms of air quality, it is the pollution issue that counts. What would they have done? What would the Gibraltar Social Democrats, whose seat he holds in the House, have done? They would have built a diesel power station at the entrance to the Upper Rock Nature Reserve. I cannot believe it, Mr Speaker. I go up  
 1990 there on my bike – less these days, because I am trying to run, as people know. I get to Jews’ Gate, it is my first stop, and I look out across the Straits of Gibraltar. Highcliffe House is there, another GSD folly. Other than that, all I see is green and the Straits before me – not if we had not won the 2011 General Election; I would see *six stacks* of exhaust pumping out diesel fumes. I have not checked this, but I think they committed to build that power station as well, if they were elected.  
 1995 Which was better for the air quality? The grimy, smelly diesel, or the LNG? The LNG. What was the better location? The entrance to the Nature Reserve, or down by the industrial port? Down by the industrial port.

So, Mr Speaker, it is not that we think that things are rosy; we still think there is a long way to go. We just think that things are better, and they certainly are better. That is the reality. But that  
 2000 is the problem when you pit a barrister against an environmentalist. Yes, the barrister can read into stuff, he can try to make his point in an eloquent way with ... Mr Feetham is not here right now, but with fire in the belly, as Mr Feetham suggested; but he cannot really understand it, unless he is a specialist environmental lawyer, and the hon. Gentleman is not a specialist environmental lawyer. But let’s be clear. In terms of the environment, apart from the fact that some of the stuff  
 2005 that their executive committee members say about Greta Thunberg – some disgraceful tweets by one of their executive committee members, Orlando Yates, about Greta Thunberg and the environmental agenda ... I do not know how he can pretend to represent a party that supports the environment, given what some of their executive members are saying. But, apart from that, and apart from their record, when you package it all up together it is very clear to us that, in the case  
 2010 of the GSD, blue and yellow do not green make. That is the reality. The blue and yellow colours in College Lane, you mix them up and they come out ... purple? I do not know, but certainly not green.

Mr Speaker, on the issue of health, Mr Phillips spoke from his script but really with no regard or reference to the progress that has been made and the problems that the Health Authority has  
 2015 had. The Health Authority has been at the front line, in the trenches in relation to COVID, so to say that we have a failed strategy on mental health and that we have waiting lists ... This is a public health system. Ours is based on the UK, and most, if not all public health systems in the world are based on the post-war UK system. They all have huge problems with waiting lists, which we will have to resolve, but on the issue of mental health there is now a strategy and there is a focus. The  
 2020 Hon. Minister has, I think, briefed the Leader of the Opposition. It is something that we are working on very closely.

And on the report, Mr Speaker, the hon. Gentleman has to remember that it was the GHA that sought the situational analysis from Public Health England through the Director of Public Health. The reason for commissioning that report from professionals from England, and totally  
 2025 unconnected to Gibraltar, was to get an absolutely objective analysis. What is wrong with that? That is what hon. Members should be telling us to do. That report highlights that there has been excellent progress and proposes other areas for improvement. But imagine if that report had been prepared before 2011. They would not even publish, when they were in Government, the Allan King report into GBC, let alone something as sensitive as this report.

2030 I really do think that the hon. Gentleman needs to remember, for the sake of all of us, what the provision of mental health services in Gibraltar was before 2011. I have told them before. The

Hon. Mr Cortes – who was Minister for Health in our first few weeks in Government – and I went to see the patients at KGV at Christmas/New Year and we were moved to tears. It was Victorian, prehistoric, but there was a shiny new Airport building by the Frontier, something the PDP, which he was in as well, attacked the Government for; we all did. The Airport, before the new KGV: unacceptable. So, when he attacks us on the provision of mental health services, he should remember where we have come from. Have we done everything we need to do? Not yet. Are we trying to achieve that? Yes, we are. Are things better? Absolutely, they are, and he, in our professional, personal, non-political lives, is somebody I regard as clever enough to know that things are much better than they were in 2011. Have we done as much as we need to? Of course we have not, but this is a road and we continue.

Then there is this idea that there is no mental health budget. What they are trying to do there is just scaremonger, as if there were no provision for mental health services in our Estimates Book. Of course there is provision in our Estimates Book for mental health services. It is there throughout the Book. On suicide, the Minister for Health has already announced that, as part of the survey of mental health services, she has specifically commissioned a review into suicides, with particular regard to male suicides. The hon. Lady already announced this a month ago. How can he just ignore the things that she has said and which are in the public domain, and come here and make a speech which ignores that? It suggests that we should get up and make points of order asking them to correct the record, because there are press releases that say the opposite of what they are saying to the House, and those press releases are in the public domain. What matters is that the Minister for Health *has* commissioned a mental health strategy from external advisers, that she *is* getting on with improving the system and that we are going to take it even further than we have already taken it under successive GSLP Liberal Ministers for Health since 2011. Why does he chose to ignore that? And why does he choose to, again, scaremonger by accusing the Government of not replacing a consultant clinical psychologist? It is just not true; nothing could be further from the truth. We have increased the complement of psychiatrists and all the posts are filled in the complement, so what is he talking about?

The difference is that he gets up and speaks as if he were a mental health expert and he gets up and speaks as if he were an environmentalist, donning the barrister's ability to take one issue, pretend to internalise it for a moment and then eloquently put his case. It does not mean that he understands it for one moment. In the unlikely event that he were ever to achieve high ministerial office, I counsel him never to do that as a Minister. You must know, when you are a Minister, that you are not the expert in the field and you must take the advice of the expert in the field. That is why – we are not doctors – we do not pretend to decide what is wrong with people or how to fix them. We are not mental health experts – we are looking for the advice to ensure that we do the right thing.

Another green bottle, in my view, has fallen – not accidentally, but simply by dint of all of that hubris that they bring to these speeches. That is it, with Mr Phillips, Mr Speaker, but there was not much to deal with. You try and delve into the substance of what he said and there was nothing there at all.

Mr Reyes was the 13th speaker, he told us, delivering his 13th speech. Thirteen is lucky for some, Mr Speaker, but it was not lucky for him. 'Carry on Edwin' was not a particularly edifying episode of the *Carry On* franchise. All we see here is another transparent bottle slipping and sliding off the wall.

Mr Reyes knows that I regard him as a very nice man, but I do ask myself, because they cost £¼ million, why is he still here? Of course, people voted for him and he is entitled to be here – if he puts his name on the ballot and people vote for him, he is entitled to be here – but *why* is he still here? You just have to watch this debate, or, indeed, any session of this Parliament, to see that he is firing on many fewer cylinders than the Father of the House, who is in his 80s and firing on more cylinders than most, me included.

Mr Reyes almost delivers exactly the same speech every year: managerial inefficiencies and bad workmanship in the sports facilities. Okay, when I call up the Civil Service to tell them that

2085 they all think they are bloated and in disarray etc., I will also call up JBS to tell them that the GSD think that they are managerially inefficient when they are building our sports facilities and that they deliver bad workmanship. These are men and women who gave every hour available to build the sports facilities in time for the Island Games. In the Island Games *they* all came and had their picture taken; they said that we should not have rushed, but they all came and had their picture taken, had their drinks and posed with the athletes. (*Interjection*)

2090 In terms of managerial inefficiencies, he knows, Mr Speaker, because we have told them, that the reason Lathbury is not finished is very simple: because we have an international contractor, because we want to build things to the right standard. If we did not build things to the right standard they would accuse us of going cheap, so we are building to the right standard. We are bringing somebody from the outside to do it. COVID has stopped them from coming. They were  
2095 withdrawn from Gibraltar. Their equipment stayed here. They have not been able to return when the pandemic receded. These guys are the top. They had to go to Tokyo to do the work on the Olympics and some of the European games, but now they are here and now they are finishing. This is not managerial inefficiency at the JBS level, this is just the reality of the world in which we have unfortunately had to live in the past 24 months. Or is he saying that the managerial  
2100 inefficiency is the Minister for Sport, because we do not manage our work site? I know that in the times of the man who used to speak from St Peter's chair, he was engineer, architect and consultant and would go on site and throw his toys out of the pram and break the tiles at the Airport terminal when things were not the way he wanted. We do not work like that, Mr Speaker, we leave it to the professionals. So, I will put Mr Reyes' criticism of managerial inefficiencies to  
2105 the managers, so that they know what to think of him and his party and what they think of the workmanship of JBS, which we hold in the highest possible regard.

Mr Speaker, when we – to use Mr Clinton's terminology – bail them out for a particular amount, it is a bail-out. When they assist the company with its balance sheet at the end of the year, each year for 10 years, it is not a bail-out, it is perfectly proper financial management of the accounts  
2110 of a Government company. Come on! I cannot accept on behalf of the people of Gibraltar this low level of intellectual engagement with these Estimates. How can they say those things about the things they did before? Have they no intellectual or logical shame? Come on! This is serious stuff. We can have beginners' debates, or we can get down into making sure that we take this community a step further by not putting such inherently contradictory arguments against each  
2115 other, contradictory to what we did when we were in Government.

Then, Mr Speaker, they attack us again, because it was not enough for Mr Clinton to attack us. Mr Reyes came and had – I was going to say another bite, but another lick, I suppose, because it did not feel like much of a bite – another kiss on the issue of how terrible it is to have a public  
2120 subscription for the building of a theatre, sitting in a building that was built by public subscription, telling us that we have spent too much on cultural projects, just not the cultural project that they like, knowing that we have a deficit of £158 million and therefore we cannot spend £15 million on a theatre, even if we would want to. They tell us that we should not be pursuing the cultural subscription. Well, I really do not believe that he is right to say that there are people in the arts who believe that this is the wrong way to do it. All that I can see is Members opposite trying to  
2125 undermine every potential donation to the good causes that are being proposed by the Government, even when they are unsolicited and hugely generous. He is completely wrong to say that the new 1,000-seat theatre would not be suitable for local productions. In fact, it is designed to be adjustable, so that you can have an audience of 200 ... you can have different sizes of audience.

2130 That is the sort of level of engagement that we have from the Hon. Mr Reyes, who then says that we do not consult teachers about the new schools. How can they say that? We have 400 teachers. I am sure we did not consult every one of them – I am sure, because what we did not do was go out to get 400 architectural opinions – but we consulted their representative bodies and we consulted individual teachers, too, in the context of the development of schools both by the  
2135 current Minister, Mr Cortes, and the former Minister, Mr Licudi. We have had consultations

directly with teachers, and in some instances with parents' groups as well. So, what are they talking about here?

2140 Yes, we need to look at the issue of the leaving age in schools. That is something that is live already in the Department and is being looked at. Apprenticeships? My goodness, I understood the need for apprenticeships when I heard the speeches from Members opposite. None of them have done a political apprenticeship with anybody who has taught them anything, and the Hon. the Leader of the Opposition, who has been a Minister, seems to have forgotten everything in the interim. And the Hon. Mr Feetham? Well, he makes the arguments that he needs to make – Welcome back, Mr Feetham. He makes the arguments that he needs to make when he needs to  
2145 make them for the purposes that he makes them. (*Interjection*)

Mr Speaker, they talk about the importance of teachers. Does he remember the criticism that they are making to us about the cost of the public sector? We have increased teachers' salaries. They did not know whether to jump on the bandwagon to say that we should, when they thought that we would not, or whether to jump on the bandwagon to say that it was terrible that we had  
2150 when we did. That is the reality.

Then, to hear Mr Reyes say that most of the meetings he has are with constituents on housing matters, you could have bowled me over. He is the Shadow Minister for Sports, Culture, Education and Housing. I would have thought he would not see as many people in the first three as he does in the fourth. He is not telling us anything very novel. He has not discovered America by telling us  
2155 that there is a bigger housing problem in Gibraltar than there is a problem of culture, sports or education. They do not know where to attack us now on housing, whether to attack us for having done enough, not having done enough, or to attack us for having done too much and having spent too much. But at some stage they have to be put to their election and they have to choose which it is, otherwise we are just going to carry on pointing out the constant, inherent contradictions in  
2160 everything they say. If we were to reduce the Civil Service and the public sector, we would be decimating it. If we employ more people in the Public Service or the Civil Service, we are bloating it. Their current position is that the Civil Service is bloated. That is what they have said, bloated. So, what is it? That they want us to decimate it, or, if we take one job, they will tell us that what we are doing is the wrong thing? Constantly trying to run with the hares and then hunt with the  
2165 hounds.

They cannot take a position where they say that we must open every vacancy and at the same time say that we must continue to try to cut costs. There is just no other way of dealing with this. But these contradictions are in everything that they do, not just in the attack on us. Perhaps we should not take it as badly as I am taking it on behalf of the people I represent, because Mr Bossino  
2170 makes no bones of describing himself as Conservative, Mr Feetham makes no bones in describing himself as Labour, and Mr Azopardi says that he is progressive. They are more than just a broad church, they are a political swatch of the unprincipled. The only thing that hangs them together is that they are not us. They have no common ideology, they have no common principles; they are not a broad church, they are a cacophony of contradictions. Their only ideology, that I can discern, is that they have no ideology. They are divided by religion, they are divided by personalities, they are divided by their approach to social issues and they are divided by their politics.  
2175

They were only ever united once, in their blazon hatred of the Father of the House. I do not know, today, whether they are going to go back to the character assassinations of Joe Bossano, or whether they are going to talk about the voodoo economics of Joe Bossano, the Walter Mitty  
2180 character who thinks that we are in *Alice in Wonderland*, and other things that we have been told by Members of the GSD, or whether now they are they are going to support him. Is it that, because they could not beat him, they have joined him, Mr Speaker? Now, they eulogise him. In 1996, the Father of the House was a danger that had to be got rid of. In 2011, the danger was 'Vote Picardo, get Bossano'. That is what the *Socialist Worker*, *The Light* etc., were saying: 'Vote Picardo, get Bossano'. It then passed to the seven days, Mr Speaker. Mr Bossino used to follow Sir Joe. Then  
2185 he went to the extreme right wing with Christian Democracy. From worship to betrayal. Judas did

that sort of thing, too, on the way to a career-ending step. (**A Member:** To Damascus?) No, not Judas. On the way to the tree in the Garden of Gethsemane. A very bad ending, Mr Speaker.

2190 The Hon. the Leader of the Opposition has been coming here constantly to tell us that we have failed to take the opportunities etc., and showed hon. Members what the opportunities were. Well, where is Gibraltar as a result of our actions? Where is Gibraltar? (**Hon. K Azopardi:** Failure.) 'Failure.' That is what he says. He is a politician in this House. Let me read him what an industry magazine, *Chesterton's Bitesize Brief*, said on 28th May this year. This is in the market – not us, because we are then calling each other names:

The supply of both properties for sale and for rent has been falling steadily this year due to Gibraltar being in the world's headlines in respect of Schengen optimism, a successful vaccine programme, the impact of the Gibraltar-Spain Tax Treaty signed in March 2021, and the passporting agreement with the UK boosting the financial services market here. This surge in interest has been from real people moving their families to Gibraltar more than property invested in the booms of recent years.

2195 That is the market. That is real. The Hon. the Leader of the Opposition would have done better to keep his mouth shut and not pretend to show off by saying 'Failure' when I asked where Gibraltar was, because this is not failure, Mr Speaker. This is market-tested, objective success. That is where we have positioned Gibraltar. That is what the market really thinks.

2200 There are two people opposite who created their own parties as their own vehicles, to try and achieve electoral success. They have not even managed that. Both of them had to fold and go into the party that lost the 2011 General Election. They could not manage even their own parties, let alone Gibraltar. Therefore, I am immensely proud that we have been able to achieve what we have achieved, and immensely proud that so many of them seemed so disappointed when I said that I was prepared to allow my name to go forward once again for the GSLP to decide whether  
2205 they wanted me to be their leader again. I know that they will not be disappointed because they believe it will be easier to beat us if I am there. This is from the party that has a leader, today, who went on television recently and said, 'We are not a party dealing with the issue of the leadership of the GSLP, we are not a party that elects leaders in uncontested elections,' whilst then brazenly saying, later in the same sentence, 'I won the last election contest in the GSD uncontested.'  
2210 Come on, Mr Speaker!

**Hon. K Azopardi:** I did not say that.

2215 **Hon. Chief Minister:** Yes, you did. I still remember falling off my chair at the level of infantile conflict in the one sentence: 'We are not a party that elects leaders in uncontested election; I won the last election contest in the GSD uncontested.'

2220 But, in this place, now everyone is a socialist, the battle is to be more socialist, not less socialist. One of them said it is a time of reckoning. It is a time of reckoning, Mr Speaker. The chickens are coming home to roost, but the chickens are sitting there on the other side, not here. We are the ones who are going to vote for the Budget. We are going to carry the responsibility to ensure that everyone in our economy is paid, despite the fact that the GSD have decided to bottle it, led by Mr Negativity, advised by Mr Spend Nothing and with Mr Morality leaching for the leadership in his prayers.

2225 And then they say they are going to establish a Public Accounts Committee. They say it every year. They were in Government with that policy and they did not establish a Public Accounts Committee. Should they ever beat us, and should we be in Opposition, they will never be able to establish a Public Accounts Committee. They will have to get rid of the GSLP from the Parliament to have a Public Accounts Committee, because we will not accept one, for all of the reasons we have already set out, because they are bad for Gibraltar. Gibraltar experimented with a Public  
2230 Accounts Committee in the late 1970s and early 1980s, and the whole of the Parliament, all of the people to whom he says he pays homage and has regard to.. Joshua Hassan, Joe Bossano, all of the people he has regard to, said, 'Never again, this does not work for Gibraltar.'

2235 But this is normal, Mr Speaker, that they say one thing in Opposition and do another in  
Government. Or can't the Leader of the Opposition remember that he went into a General  
Election in 1996, saying, 'We will get rid of the web of companies', and when he came out in 2003,  
let alone when they left in 2011, all they had done was establish more companies, and what they  
have called, pejoratively, a web of companies in 1996, they called the Government's company  
2240 structure, the corporate structure? The rat-infested rubble mountain had become Sovereign Bay,  
although it looked the same, and the web of companies had become the Government's corporate  
structure. Mr Speaker, in my life I cannot put up with this hypocrisy without pointing it out. I just  
cannot put up with this hypocrisy without pointing it out. (*Interjection*)

2245 Mr Speaker, for a party that has been the Government of Gibraltar – good and bad, but it has  
been the Government of Gibraltar – they really are falling into the worst sort of populism. They  
really are letting down the things that they say they did that were right when they were in  
government. They want us to put up the cost of nothing. They want us to make savings on waste,  
which they say does not exist because the only waste is the double Book. They want us to either  
spend less and do more, or spend more and save more. But, look, people can see through that.  
Even the unions do not believe them. They see, already, Roy 'Scissorhands' Clinton there, ready  
to cut. They see, Keith 'Bandwagon' Azopardi jump on causes without even checking the cost or  
2250 the direction of the bandwagon, just for the sake of a few votes. They see Mr Bossino against  
everything they stand for in terms of personal liberty, liberalism and freedom. And now,  
Mr Speaker, we will look at the many inconsistencies of Miss Hassan Nahon as well. Interestingly,  
perhaps, for the first time in years – perhaps tactically cleverly – nobody sees Mr Feetham.

2255 We are not a populist Government. We are going to do the right thing for our people, popular  
or not. They are about cut, cut, cut; we are about protect, protect, protect. This is the moment of  
reckoning; and, if it is a moment of reckoning, we will come out on top because we will take  
responsibility for the things that we do.

2260 Before I end my analysis of each of the contributions that we have heard today, I have to move  
to another bottle sitting on the green benches, and this really was no better and no worse than  
*Carry on Cleo*. The hon. Lady came to this House last week to demonstrate that she is long on  
surname and short on ideas. I was, frankly, shocked and disappointed by her mercenary approach.  
All the hours that we, on this side of the House, have spent agonising, analysing, working on the  
COVID issue, all of that effort – indeed, all of the heartbreak that we have felt on this side of the  
House, genuine heartbreak, all of the consideration – was all useless, even the work that we did  
2265 with hon. Members opposite. We should have just asked Marlene.

2270 The hon. Lady got up and told us that she was right all along, throughout the pandemic, and  
that if we had done things her way, fewer people would have died. Seriously, Mr Speaker? Has  
she forgotten that she was with us in my office on 17th November with the Hon. the Leader of the  
Opposition and, I think, Mr Phillips, with the Director of Public Health and the Minister for Health,  
looking at whether we could reopen ERS safely, which we did? The Leader of the Opposition said  
to me, 'Look, this is a difficult decision. We will take it together, and if things go wrong we will face  
it together.' To be fair to him – I have called him out on every other contradiction – he has stood  
by that, Mr Speaker, because we wanted to make that decision together. This was an issue that  
was affecting everyone in our community. People could not go and see their elderly relatives. It  
2275 was a very tough issue. Why didn't she tell us then that she had the answer to how to deal with  
the COVID pandemic and that nobody would have died if we just did things the way Marlene said?

2280 Why do we help people who she refers to us, Mr Speaker, if we are so remote that I am on  
planet Picardo and people who need help are ignored on planet Earth? Why, Mr Speaker?  
Obviously I am not on planet Picardo, but she needed to say something, or at least one of her  
scriptwriters wanted to write the planet Picardo thing. The fact is, for us on this side of the House,  
this is not a hobby, this is real.

And why is it always sexism if somebody criticises Together Gibraltar? I thought she was not  
just 'her'. We are not supposed to even call her the 'independent Member' because she is not an  
independent Member, she represents Together Gibraltar, which is a political party which will have

2285 men in it and women in it, etc. So, when we criticise Together Gibraltar, why is it sexism? Why is  
 it men mansplaining her, if she is a party involving men and women? Or is she just an independent  
 Member? Even when Samantha Sacramento tells us something that is a disagreement or explains  
 something, she is being mansplained? Of course she is not being mansplained, of course not.

2290 Mr Speaker, if I am on planet Picardo, she got herself here pretty sharpish from my office  
 45 minutes before she delivered her speech, because she was in my office, 45 minutes before she  
 delivered her speech, on an issue that she wanted to see me on, which was unrelated to the  
 debate. So, she has the fastest space shuttle in history, or maybe it is that I am not that remote  
 and the planet Picardo issue was just a device.

2295 She has been inconsistent on the abortion referendum, inconsistent on how to vote on this  
 debate – as she has already told us – inconsistent on whether to campaign on the referendum.  
 Inconsistent, inconsistent, inconsistent. In fact, Mr Speaker, she is becoming so inconsistent that  
 keeping up with her latest position is becoming a recognised cure for boredom. She did a U-turn  
 on referenda on the abortion issue, a U-turn on how to vote on this debate, U-turns on the power  
 station and U-turns on the environment. It is clear that the hon. Lady is no Iron Lady, that is for  
 2300 sure. Inconsistent, ineffective and unprepared for election to high office, for exactly those reasons.

That is the unfortunate reality, which my personal friendship and affection for her can no  
 longer hide. In life, there are people who are nice enough, but not good enough for a job like this,  
 and she is nice enough but she is not good enough. This is tough, it is hard and it requires the most  
 extreme work ethic, the sharpest ability to understand documentation and turn it around; and,  
 2305 nice enough though she is, good enough and tough enough she obviously is not. And you know  
 what, Mr Speaker? I am sure that she knows it, her supporters know it, and the electorate knows  
 it, and none of that is because she is a woman because there are many women in Gibraltar who  
 have all of the qualities necessary to be Chief Minister. There are women who are good enough  
 and who are tough enough, clever enough and hardworking enough, but she is not. There are  
 2310 many women who have what it takes to be Chief Minister, just like there are many men, but she  
 does not have what it takes and she knows it, her party knows it and the electorate knows it. That  
 is not *mansplaining*, that is *explaining* why she is where she is, alone in this place.

Yes, she topped the Opposition poll, but she got no one else in with her. People are giving her  
 a voice in this place – yes they are – but they are not giving her responsibility, because although  
 2315 she has the attributes to have a voice, she has none of the basic qualities necessary to seriously  
 discharge the responsibilities of Chief Minister, and that is what she is proposing to the electorate.  
 When she leads a party at a general election, she is saying that they should choose her and that  
 she should be sworn in as Chief Minister. She would not be able to do the job. She knows it, her  
 party knows it and the electorate knows it. No insults, no sexism, just the truth, because I know  
 2320 that the truth is the most politically effective tool.

What does she stand for, Mr Speaker? The hon. Lady has come to this debate in a way that has  
 demonstrated that her policies are vacuous – remarkable, because we perhaps have not analysed  
 in such detail before the contradictions of this daughter of privilege. One day she says the  
 environment should be a non-partisan issue. The next day, when I propose and the Leader of the  
 2325 Opposition agrees – we were then candidates – that we should have a select committee jointly  
 chaired by the Chief Minister and the Leader of the Opposition, she says, ‘No, that is not a good  
 thing because the environment should be a political issue. That is how we go further, by pushing  
 each other further.’ Come on! Take one line and stick to it.

She says she is progressive, but she first got people’s votes by standing, she said, for traditional  
 2330 GSD values, the ones that she now says are anathema to her and Mr Bossino constantly reminds  
 us of – but at least now the GSD is led by the leader of the Progressive Democratic Party.

She said one day in May, two or three years ago, that she would campaign for a referendum –  
 not *in* a referendum, Mr Speaker, but *for*. She said that she would campaign *for* a referendum to  
 defend women’s human right to abortion. Then she said, in September the same year, that a  
 2335 referendum would be an aberration against women’s human rights. Then she also said that if  
 there was a referendum, she would not campaign in one. Then she campaigned in the

referendum. Mr Speaker, communication is her forte, consistency is not. Or is it that she, although she attacks the barristocracy, is displaying the same qualities as a barrister, able to argue any brief convincingly?

2340 Politics today is tougher than in the 1970s and 1980s. What is she going to do if she is in front of a room full of UK officials hanging on her every word, noting down everything that she says when she gives an answer to a question, and when they ask her the same question tomorrow and she gives the opposite, like she has done on all of those issues I have already highlighted?

2345 Mr Speaker, what we cannot get away from is that she is the daughter of the Adam of the barristocracy in this place. The only thing that she has been consistent in, in *all* the time that she has been in politics, is one rallying call that she shares with William Shakespeare – *Henry VI, Part 2*:

The first thing we do, let's kill all the lawyers.

That is the only thing that she says consistently! That the barristocracy is bad for Gibraltar, etc.

Of course I should say, Mr Speaker, that that was in *Henry VI, Part 2*, and in Marlene Hassan Nahon, Part 2. Because in Marlene Hassan Nahon, Part 1, she was elected behind the coat-tails of Mr Feetham, a barrister. A much-maligned, Mr Feetham, Mr Speaker. (*Interjections*) Actually, when you analyse what Shakespeare meant, he was defending lawyers in that line. If you look at the commentaries, the whole point was to say somebody who wants to take over a society would first of all kill all the lawyers because the lawyers are the frontier between abuse and no abuse, the ones who will protect you from being taken to a cell and never being seen again. The ones who will defend the ability to have freedom of speech.

2355 So the lawyers were being set up by Shakespeare there as the guardians of independent thinking. The lawyers, the ones she wants to get rid of in this place; the ones that she says are a bad thing – the barristocracy. It might be very unpopular to defend lawyers. I remember, Mr Speaker, the Gibraltar in which I was brought up, where there were very few lawyers and it was a very good thing when we were *encouraged* to go away and study law and study accountancy, and I was very proud that I achieved what had been opened to me by the scholarships that the Father of the House had provided for. But what happens if we pursue the attitude that the hon. Lady wishes? Where Sir Peter used to say, 'You need to pay people well, because otherwise you will only have people who do not have professions coming into the House.'

2360 The Hon. the Father of the House imitated him beautifully in saying so.

2365 The hon. Lady is saying, 'We do *not* want people who are professionals in the House. We do not want barristers in the Parliament.' (*Interjection*) Discriminating and disqualifying us on the basis simply of our chosen profession, Mr Speaker. It is incredible. But what would be the future for our grandchildren if Marlene's way was what actually manifested itself and became a reality?

2370 So first she gets rid of all the lawyers. This will be, in my view, the story that would be told to our grandchildren, Mr Speaker, of the future under Marlene. What happened after all the lawyers were killed or left politics to avoid Marlene's purge? It says here that Marlene took over in 2023. She could not bring in new business and handle stuff, and there was a problem funding the Health Services. So in 2024 Together Gibraltar decided to attack the doctors and nurses who had been complaining about these problems, to get rid of what she called the 'doctocracy'. She called them a 'cabal' to get people against them and said that the health authority was in disarray. Then there were a couple of tough statements against Marlene by accountants in 2025, who saw Gibraltar was going bankrupt. So Together Gibraltar then attacked the 'accountantocracy'. All businesses left after that one.

2380 With no lawyers, doctors, nurses or accountants, the teachers found that they were amongst the best paid in town, but that law and order was breaking down. There were no credible Health Services any more. So in 2026, the teachers criticised Marlene's Together Gibraltar Government. Marlene said that that was typical of a gender-neutral plutocracy who think that they know better than anyone else. They all left after that. So in Gibraltar, then, there was no free speech. In 2027 it became a crime to blame Marlene for the 'Purple Movement' – as Together was then known –

for anything. Citizens felt disenfranchised. It took a young lawyer, a barrister to turn things around. He was operating in the shadows and because of the ban on lawyers he practised covertly and clandestinely from Horse Barrack Lane. He started working hard to get people equality of opportunity, whatever their colour, profession or political creed. He called his movement the 'Association for the Advancement of Civil Rights', or the AACR for short. His was truly a progressive movement.

2390

Come on, Mr Speaker. Is that what she is saying to us, that we have to start again from scratch? That the journey on which we were embarked – thanks to her father, a barrister, a white male barrister – is one which none of the rest of us are able to pursue, even though he did everything for all of us, regardless of sex, race or colour to be able to do it? That we have to go back and start again from scratch where that brilliant, charismatic young Joshua Hassan started it all, just because she broaches no criticism?

2395

Mr Speaker, look at her article when she spoke in here about the New Year's Eve Agreement. Let's go back and see what she said in January about the New Year's Eve Agreement. She accuses us of *spin*, but when she reaches the same conclusion that we reach, *her* conclusions are honest and truthful. But when it is our conclusion, it is spin. That is just unsustainable; that is spinning out of control, Mr Speaker. She is a very good communicator but, Mr Speaker, having seen her here for the years that we have seen her, do we all really think that she has the sufficient intellectual rigour to carry the key office of state of Chief Minister in this community?

2400

She does not even see through the lack of logic of the people who write the speeches for her. She is criticising us for getting too close to the Tories and tells me during the election at Inces Hall – and I think the hon. Leader of the Opposition's jaw dropped, as well as mine, when we were both candidates there – that we should not get close to Boris Johnson because he does not share our values and our beliefs, Mr Speaker. That is why we had to tell her in January that she repeatedly and dangerously contradicts herself.

2405

Then, Mr Speaker, she says that she is for 'constructive politics'. Well, one day she is for constructive politics and the next day she is Judy in the longest-running political soap opera in the world! The *Punch and Judy Show*, Mr Speaker. I may be on planet Picardo, Mr Speaker, but she is definitely in planet Hollywood.

2410

By the way, Mr Speaker, calling me as she did 'a gifted actor in a second-rate play' is unfortunately to praise me and talk down Gibraltar. I think, Mr Speaker, that Gibraltar as our stage is anything but second-rate, whatever Ms Hassan Nahon may seek to imply, but she is a little like the Leader of the Opposition in that – say one thing, do another. Her lack of consistency, Mr Speaker, since that message of the lack of any intellectual rigour, is dangerous in the extreme in the context of being in Government. For example, her position on digital Government: 'Do it!' she says to the Hon. Mr Isola. 'Do it, but do not pay for it.' 'Do it, quicker, but make sure it costs nothing.'

2415

She is in cloud cuckoo land, Mr Speaker. She contradicts herself so much even within her one speech, that she should get her two speechwriters to go out and meet for a drink. At least she should buy her speechwriters lunch once a year, Mr Speaker, so they are more or less on the same page. I said 'speechwriters', I should have said 'scriptwriters' for planet Hollywood, Mr Speaker.

2420

How can this be a budget of decay, Mr Speaker? It is certainly an investment budget, but not a giveaway budget. How can it be a budget of decay if she has accused us of throwing all of the money at Gibraltar until now? It does not make any sense, there can be no decay if we have thrown all the money in. 'This is the moment of reckoning for the Chief Minister and the GSLP', she says. It is a moment of reckoning for every economy in the world, for the public finances of every nation and for the whole of this nation. She says this is a budget of anger and frustration. Really?

2425

Mr Speaker, I missed the poll tax riots outside this Parliament. We have not been able to use the golden eggs of the goose to invest. So where does she think the money is? Does she not drive around and see all of the differences that we have made in Gibraltar? We may disagree about whether we should have done it or not – Mr Feetham's argument – but it is there, Mr Speaker.

2435

That is why Mr Feetham can enumerate the 750, or whatever he says, the billions he says that we have spent, because he goes through in his speech and he tells us where it is.

2440 You can say that we have invested too much, or you can say that we have spent too much, or you can say that we have not spent enough and that things are decaying. But you cannot say that we have been spending too much until yesterday, and that this now decay, because we are going to spend the same amount we spent in 2019, but not a penny more, because that is what this Book does. Or has she not seen that what we are proposing to spend is the Budget as at 2019?

2445 So you might say well, look, therefore there is a reduction by the rate of inflation since then. You might say that, 1.8%. But how can it be a budget of decay? Imagine if she was the person sitting where the Deputy Chief Minister and I have to sit, in front of Spain and the United Kingdom! We have not spent prudently or responsibly? We are spending on schools, on homes, on health facilities, on teachers, on health services, on civil servants and public servants. The needy will not  
2450 be able to feel the support of the State when they need it most because of this Budget. They are needy?

Mr Speaker, did she not hear the part where I put up those parts of the allowances and those parts of the benefits which affect those who need it most in our economy? Of course, we invested in the people in this Budget. Does she not understand the words that I used, Mr Speaker? Then  
2455 she tells us that the route to prosperity is to get rid of the bunkering industry. I do not know where she got that one from, but she said that the Civil Service is in disarray. I would remind the Civil Service union of her views in respect of the public sector.

Can we promise our children that they will have the protection when they need it in the future? Yes, you can promise your children that as long as the GSLP Liberals are in power, because that is  
2460 what I have said we are doing with this Budget: we are going to stabilise the public finances and we are going to make them strong again. But you will not be able to say that to your children if what you do is seek at this time to continue to give away money from the public finances.

If we respond without making the most fortunate pay, she said. We *are* making the most fortunate pay, Mr Speaker. I have made the point before, but did she not hear that we have not  
2465 put up the tax for those on the GIBS system or the allowance-based system? We have not. And we have not put tax on pensions. Instead, we have raised the Cat 2 amounts and the HEPSS amounts. I said the things which were the direct opposite of the things that she replied to.

‘We were left out of the negotiations on BEAT between the Leader of the Opposition and the Chief Minister.’ Yes, she was Mr Speaker, because this was about quickly having to do something  
2470 in the face of a crisis that was coming and we did it together – because *he* is the Leader of the Opposition and *I* am the Chief Minister, and Mr Clinton is the person with responsibility for public finances because he has been designated by the Leader of the Opposition. Those were the relevant portfolio holders and that is how we moved to make a quick decision. Not because she is not a boy and not because she is a girl, that had nothing to do with it. This was running against  
2475 the clock to make things happen.

But, Mr Speaker, the worst excess I have ever heard, painful in the extreme, was to try and blame us for the 94 deaths from COVID. It was an unforgiveable stretch, Mr Speaker, she set out to blame us personally for that. I do not know if I will ever be able to forgive her that – in my view,  
2480 Mr Speaker – unconscionable attempt to play a blame game with the lives of our people. None of *them* have, Mr Speaker. The GSD and the GSLP go at each other hammer and tongs, especially in this debate, but there are some things, there are some issues that we will not go to, Mr Speaker, to politicise the deaths of those of our fellow Gibraltarians who passed away. It was the most remarkable and disconnected statement I have heard in this House, Mr Speaker. The most remarkable and disconnected statement.

2485 A ‘more prudent management of the pandemic’ is what she called them. ‘The hypocrisy of Mr Picardo’. But the only thing that we have done on this side of the House is talk to clinicians and take their advice, question them to make sure that we were being diligent in our approach, and act on advice throughout. What came after the Christmas comiloma she complained about? My goodness, maybe she had forgotten the bitter complaining about the cancellation of the Christmas

2490 comiloma which even lead to a demonstration outside my office. (*Interjection*) I think she said at the time that we had not done things right. I will tell her for nothing, Mr Speaker, that those moments were hell on earth.

We gave everything that we had to get it right. Everything that we had, and more, and then some. So to come here, Mr Speaker, to hear her in this debate crow about how she would have done better was not edifying at all. It was thoroughly unedifying. I think, with the very greatest of respect to her, it was potentially a career-ending position for her to take, because the callousness that it took to try and put those deaths to her political service is worse than unconscionable. (*Interjection*) Of course there will be an inquiry, Mr Speaker, we have announced an inquiry some time ago, but does she think that we should be doing the inquiry when the problems that we have still require those in our Health Services who will be giving evidence to the inquiry to be dealing with the problem? It was worse than cheap, Mr Speaker, and her sneering now does not make it any better. It was the lowest I have ever seen a Member of this Parliament stoop, and I have seen some things here, Mr Speaker. This was the darkest chapter in our political history. It is beyond politics, Mr Speaker, to try and play with those 94 deaths. She would have done better, she said, that lives would not have been lost, in effect, is what she is saying, if she had been in charge. What a huge mistake.

‘An inquiry into the second wave is absolutely necessary.’ Of course we agree. We felt there was a need for an inquiry when we had the first wave, but the waves have been relentless. Everywhere else the decision has been, like here, that you cannot start the inquiry now, because you will take the people who are *still* on the frontline – today there are nine people in our COVID ward and two in the intensive care unit – and you pull them away from the work that they have to do in order to attend to the issue of the inquiry.

A second wave happened as a result of what was happening in November-December. She was in my office on 17th November to open up ERS. Then she talked about how incoherent our messages were during the pandemic. She had just thanked the public broadcaster, the national broadcaster, for the fantastic job they had done of communication during the pandemic. Then she accused us of incoherence of our message. Mr Speaker, wake up and smell the Starbucks! The national broadcaster was carrying *our* message. She congratulates them for sending the message and how important that was, then she chastises her for our contradictory message. That was the message she had just congratulated the national broadcaster for. Come on! And sneering from across the Floor of the House does not make it better, Mr Speaker.

She talks about civil servants enjoying very generous conditions and private sector workers enduring pretty dire ones. Well, Mr Speaker, that is why we had to bring the Private Sector Pensions Bill to this House. But she stood with the party that did not bring that Bill to first get elected. She said our pensions are squalid. Well, it is a very easy way to try to win points, Mr Speaker. But when you put out what she says are our squalid pensions, you take out the fact that there is no social insurance payable by people after a particular age, and the fact that there is no tax on pensions, Mr Speaker, and our pension does not look so squalid. I am going to do the exercise to show hon. Members where our pension lies in the European scale.

She talks about all of these things, Mr Speaker, like a progressive, but she first got her seat in this Parliament with the party opposite, who left us a minimum wage that we had to double. She talked, Mr Speaker, about Together Gibraltar’s first and only election. This is the first time I address her across the Floor of this House since she has been here, with her own votes, Mr Speaker. But it is not her first and only election, she stood with the GSD on their pre-election pamphlet for 2015.

This is, Mr Speaker, the woman who says that she is not a politician, she is something different. She is not a politician, but she has spent since 2013 trying to get elected, and she said she is a different sort of politician. Well, she has tried to get elected with the second party in Gibraltar, did not get elected in the by-election, *got* elected with them, and then six months later left them, Mr Speaker.

2545 She presents herself as not just anti-lawyer, but anti-politician. She is the politician who is anti-politician. I assume that is popular. She is the anti-lawyer daughter of a lawyer who put the silver spoon in her mouth. The politician who is the anti-politician daughter of a politician. Come on! She needs to think about these things, she needs to analyse what she says and what she stands for, and spend time reflecting on who she is.

2550 I apparently made a triple admission of guilt by saying that if I had not hidden things in the companies, I would have had to come to Parliament to extend the debt ceiling. Well, Mr Speaker, I cannot imagine that I made a triple admission of anything, because the hon. Lady – on days other than Mr Clinton and the Leader of the Opposition – also was invited to my office to see all the structures of the companies and how we structured all those investments and the repayments, etc., etc. Then those things led to press releases that said we had met with them and explained it to them. So what is it that I have admitted that has not already been out in blazing lights? All of the money that we have invested in all of things that Mr Feetham has enumerated.

2555 Did she not hear me say in September last year anyway, Mr Speaker, that of course there is borrowing in companies. That is what the debate has been about. But it has never been *hidden* borrowing. The argument that we have had in her presence since 2015 is not about whether or not there is borrowing in companies, it is about whether or not it is appropriate to have borrowing in companies who do capital projects. What we say to them on the other side, to the GSD, the party with which she has stood is, 'Look, you used to do it and it was fine when you did it. What is wrong when we do it?' They have not yet given us a satisfactory answer. But, to be fair to them, they have never suggested that we have pretended that there is not Government company debt. The argument has been the opposite.

2560 Then she said – and, frankly, I think that the only fish that died was her own credibility. I must tell you that, Mr Speaker. She said, 'We need to be backed by the United Kingdom to get interest rates which are low.' That really made me worry about her ability to understand even the most simple things, Mr Speaker. We have the lowest cost of borrowing available to us already, because interest rates are lower than they have ever been. The issue has always been, Mr Speaker, which we have debated across the Floor of this House, to get the rate *even* lower in the interests of the taxpayer. In other words, not the lowest rate ever available commercially, the lowest rate ever available to Gibraltar by permitting Gibraltar to borrow with the covenant of a *sovereign* rate, which we have never had before – for the simple reason that we are not a sovereign state. So banks can *never* lend to us on the basis of us being a sovereign state, if we are not a sovereign state. Unless we have a guarantee from a sovereign state. It is that simple. It is not that we have found ourselves in a situation where we need the United Kingdom to be able to borrow at that rate, it is that we would never be able to borrow at that rate without the support of the United Kingdom.

2570 If we came to this House with £10 billion in the Government cash reserve, we would still borrow at the same rate, unless we have the sovereign guarantee of the United Kingdom. Does she not understand that? Obviously not. That is basic, simple 101 stuff. The person who says that they want to be Chief Minister of Gibraltar *has* to understand that. If she cannot understand that – as she shows she cannot, Mr Speaker – how on earth can she ever be trusted to understand the *really* complicated stuff?

2585 She has shown us, Mr Speaker, in the past six years since she is here, that she can do an excellent job of reading a script. But no more. No understanding of the complex financial issues. She has to really find somebody who understands these issues to start advising her, because the stuff her current scriptwriters are coming out with is worse than poor. The first action on poverty that we need to see in this House is her getting away from her very poor scriptwriters, Mr Speaker.

2590 But then she said, Boris Johnson has lived up to his promise. She was praising Boris Johnson. She was telling me never to talk to people like Boris Johnson because they do not share our values. She says that more pages in this Book just mean more lies. Mr Speaker, you are the arbiter of whether we can use that word or not and I think, on balance, on reflection, in that context if it is an admissible word under the Rules of Parliament, because it is not an accusation of lying, it is just

2595 to say that there are lies. Of course it is parliamentary because it is not an allegation against the Member. In fact, what she is saying is that the public servants of Gibraltar who prepared this Book have filled it with lies to make it bigger. That is what she is saying. She went into a general election, Mr Speaker, saying that the public sector was corrupt; and now she has come to this debate to say that the public servants of Gibraltar added more pages to add more lies. It cannot be an accusation against me because I do not compile the Book. Okay?

2600 Let me be clear about one thing. I have *never* lied to the people of Gibraltar and I have never lied to this House and I never will, Mr Speaker. Every public servant that I have worked with, whether a civil servant or from another sector of the public sector has, as far as I have seen, done always their level best with the maximum of integrity to put the real position in the context of any public debate, whether it is a press release or whether it is an Estimates Book. *Always* the truth.

2605 Then she moved on to the European Union mandate, the European Commission's mandate, and she took us through an article in politico. She said that the article in politico says *this*, and it says *this*, and the article in politico says *that*. Mr Speaker, has she not read the European Union Commission's mandate? It is 24 pages. It is very detailed. But if she is going to talk about the mandate, which was published the day before, or two days before she got up to speak, she cannot get away with commenting on the basis of one article that summarises 24 pages into six paragraphs. Not if you want to be taken seriously, leading a political party, saying that you should be the Chief Minister of Gibraltar.

2610 Apparently, Mr Speaker, the mandate caught us by surprise, but not her, because she knew that this is what was coming; although the non-spun honest, truthful view that she reached in January was that the New Year's Eve Agreement was a very good thing. We reached the same conclusion, but we were just spinning. She reached that conclusion and she was being honest and truthful. But now, she was not surprised that the European Union Commission mandate, which she did not refer to at all directly, just because of an article that she had read, somehow, Mr Speaker, did not surprise her but surprised us.

2620 Let me tell her something, Mr Speaker, I am not giving anything away by saying it surprised the Foreign Secretary as much as it surprised me. So, Mr Speaker, frankly, I do not know what it is that she has in terms of connection, whether somebody was telling her in the European Commission what was coming, and she was not surprised, and somebody somewhere has all the answers to COVID and told her what we had to do, so that 34 people did not die. Spain has welcomed the mandate, she said – in other words, we have been duped by Spain. Yes, Spain has welcomed the mandate with two nuances saying that the final treaty must accord to the New Year's Eve Agreement, and insisting that they will call in a Frontex operation.

2630 Then she moved on in her sweep of her speech to tell us not to trade with Morocco, because it is a totalitarian regime and it is no replacement for membership of the EU. Nobody is saying that it is a replacement for trading with the EU, Mr Speaker. (*Interjections*) No substitute, she says, for trading with the EU. Well, okay, it is not a substitute, but there are many lines of trade that we will have to pursue with many countries around the world, including the EU. She is saying in her Budget speech for 2021, slating Morocco, that Morocco is a totalitarian regime, and then she went through all the things that she said about Morocco. I do not need to remind hon. Members, we were all here out of respect to hear her.

2635 At the Gibraltar Federation of Small Businesses pre-election debate in 2019, in the same debate where she told me that I should not be talking to people like Boris Johnson, she said that Morocco was brilliant and that we should have invested there a long time ago – it is an exciting market, it is there for the taking, she said. Another one of her many contradictions. Mr Speaker, not even Marlene can trust Marlene any more. But of course, in the GFSB debate she had been asked a question by a person – apparently of Moroccan origin with a Moroccan ethnic name – saying that he thought it was a very good idea to trade with Morocco and did she not think that actually one of the things that we should do more of was trade with Morocco? So of course she gave the positive answer.

2645 She called *me* a chameleon. If I had not done the *Karma Karma Chameleon* sketch for them in 2019, I would do it for her now, Mr Speaker. Come on! I suppose it is true, Mr Speaker, that none of us ever see the mote in our own eye. She is just spinning, Mr Speaker, and spinning out of control. But does she think that when she stands with Together Gibraltar in a general election in Gibraltar, she is standing to be the President of the United States? Does she think that if she were by some accident of history, standing with Together Gibraltar again to become Chief Minister at the next general election, that she can go to Morocco after what she has said in this debate, because she has such a huge nuclear arsenal as Gibraltar that they will disregard what she said because it is so important for Morocco to trade with her? No, Mr Speaker, she has blotted her – thank goodness, not *our* – copybook, with Morocco. Therefore, Mr Speaker, I think if she were ever to become Chief Minister, the first thing Morocco will do is have regard to her very, very disparaging remarks about them.

2650 Then after that she hit me, because I had had great success in my relationship with Boris Johnson. That is how she said it, that ‘he was very successful in his relationship with Boris Johnson’. But that is just Boris Johnson. We will see what comes after that. ‘So you do not have a successful relationship with the British Government, you just have a successful relationship with Boris Johnson, who has been fantastic and true to his word, although I said that you should not even talk to him.’

2660 Well, Mr Speaker, look, at least I have got form! David Cameron had a relationship with the Government of Gibraltar led by me. Not because he wanted a relationship with me, but because he wanted a relationship with the Government of Gibraltar and I was leading it and I was able to establish a relationship. Theresa May, I was there on the day she became leader of the Conservative party; I was there on the day that she went to have hands kissed with the Queen; I was the first appointment that Mrs May did with the Deputy Chief Minister and the Attorney General, Mr Speaker, after Mr Cameron left the Chamber. And an excellent relationship with Boris Johnson. Keir Starmer, Mr Speaker, is somebody I consider a friend, who I have known for many years and I have worked with. Labour is *our* sister party, Mr Speaker. The Liberals are *their* sister party. So looking to the context of where the relationship with Britain is and where it is going, as long as *we* are here, I think people are entitled to think that it is on pretty safe ground because we are not going to take the view that we should not talk to Boris Johnson because we do not like other things he has said.

2675 Then she said that I had said that Gibraltar is not ready to take any step on the road to decolonisation, and that I had talked about the Crown Dependencies ... And what was this context of the ‘Channel Islands style’? Well, Mr Speaker, does not she know that the Channel Islands are closer to the United Kingdom than the overseas territories? I fully accept that the Channel Islands-style relationship might not be the one that we want, because there is a different historical constitutional relationship between the Channel Islands and the United Kingdom. They come under the Home Office and they have unwritten conventions which may not apply to us. But closer to Britain? Absolutely I believe that we should be.

2680 Independent, free association and under the European Union President? No, Mr Speaker, I will leave that to the hon. Member, but I will tell her what we believe, Mr Speaker. I believe – at least it is true of Mr Feetham, I do not know about the others – but for us and for Mr Feetham, I think it is true, ‘*With* Britain, not *under* Britain’. That is the way it was expressed. Then, Mr Speaker, she said that I had to have regard to my failure to do what other leaders in our very successful past had done. Okay. Who? Sir Bob Peliza? Sir Peter Caruana? Adolfo Canepa? Sir Joe Bossano? Which one did she mean? Because if she entreats the Hon. the Father of the House not to mention Sir Joshua, then she cannot have meant Sir Joshua. She cannot have been praying in aid Sir Joshua, in this context, having chastised the Father of the House for doing so. Or is it that when it is a positive association that works for her, it is fine, but if she perceives it to be a negative association, it is not fine? What is it, Mr Speaker?

2695 The hon. Lady needs to work out what her position is in that respect. Then she tells us that we are rated with Malta and that this is terrible in the context of the GFIU work, etc. Mr Speaker, the

2700 hon. Lady really, in my view, chose to disrespect and damage the excellent work that has been done by our Law Enforcement agencies – the GFIU, the GFSC, the Gambling Commission, the LSRA and the entire private sector who are working with us, as we continue to engage with Moneyval in the process of our evaluation. Gibraltar is a *compliant* jurisdiction, and we are proud to be, and that is why hon. Members did not criticise us on this issue. She criticised *them* for not criticising *us* on this issue. They were right not to criticise us.

2705 This is all of Gibraltar together work, Mr Speaker, especially the work that we are doing in the areas of anti-money laundering and countering terrorist finance. All of that, Mr Speaker. We are one of the few jurisdictions that have an open and public register of beneficial ownership. We take compliance with international standards really seriously, whatever the hon. Lady thinks is popular to say here today.

2710 The hon. Lady knows – or *should* know – that Moneyval is a constant area of work; and she should know that, Mr Speaker, because on 5th February this year we brought to this Parliament a Bill to amend the Proceeds of Crime Act. My friend, Mr Isola, told us all then the following, which she heard:

Therefore, although fully compliant with all EU directives, as at 31st December in this area, Moneyval's Fifth Round Mutual Evaluation Report on Gibraltar adopted by Moneyval on December 19th 2019, identified a number of technical deficiencies. We have therefore embarked on a comprehensive review of all of these recommendations in the Moneyval Report and this Bill seeks to incorporate all the legislative changes required to address the technical deficiencies addressed in the Report, and thereby comply with the requirements of the FTF2 commendations.

2715 She was present. She made not a single comment on the Bill or raised any concerns. She is criticising the GSD for not criticising us on this issue. She sat through that, Mr Speaker. She said nothing. And do you know what she did, Mr Speaker, she voted in favour of the Bill. Good! It was the right thing to do. It was something on which we all had to be united. But she made not one comment. We continue to work with our Moneyval evaluators, Mr Speaker. Even today we are finalising our latest response and this is work in progress, and when we finish we will have to start all over again, because it is a constant evaluation and re-evaluation.

2720 It is about time, Mr Speaker, that the hon. Lady started to support this work rather than trying to undermine it. She needs to support it across all of the private and public sector bodies who are working together to satisfy the evaluators of our compliance. Her comments, Mr Speaker, are irresponsible, unacceptable and certainly not appreciated by the industry. I can tell her that much.

2725 Mr Speaker, frankly, I have to tell her, she said that her father does not deserve to be linked to her mistake. She said it. She huffs and puffs, Mr Speaker, but she said it and when she says it, it is okay but when I am going to deal with it, it is not okay. Well, *she* said, her father does not deserve to be linked to her mistakes. Mr Speaker, like most Gibraltarians, I admired him deeply. As her father, I am sure he would have no problem whatsoever being associated with her mistakes. I would have no problem being associated with mistakes, if my children are being blamed, totally for them. But let us be fair to Sir Joe. He may have been beaten four times by her father, but he has beaten her three times already. The GSLP won the by-election in 2013 when she stood. We won the general election in 2015 when she stood, and we won the general election in 2019 when she stood.

2730 On community care, Mr Speaker, she said: 'We do not want charity here.' She walked in and said, 'A pension for everyone.' That is what she said. She is showing, Mr Speaker, that she has no clue; and she delivered her speech after Sir Joe had delivered his speech, but she just ploughed on. She had issued a statement, Mr Speaker, he had criticised it in detail, she learned nothing from what he expressed were the problems, she just ploughed on. In doing so, she revealed that her plan is just again a disaster for Gibraltar, creating more liabilities and winding up community care completely. That is what she told this House. And she repeated that the fiscal measures in the Budget are tougher on the working and middle classes. Really, Mr Speaker? I have not met any  
2740 working-class person that holds a captive certificate or a HEPSS certificate, and they are the only ones who are affected by the fiscal measures.

2745 The corporates have had their tax put up from 2.5%. The corporates. How can she say this? It is remarkable, Mr Speaker. How can she say this? We have a regressive tax system that allows the super-rich to pay less is what she said. Nowhere in any electoral material has she ever said that she will get rid of the Cat 2 certificates or the HEPSS certificates. Nowhere! Indeed, she stood for election with the GSD that had brought in the GIBS system, Mr Speaker. So the architects of the current Income Tax Act stood for election in 2011 using the Income Tax Act 2010 as one of the things that they said was one of their greatest achievements, which brought with it the Cat 2 and the HEPSS. How can she say that she does not support that, Mr Speaker? That is the vote that got her into the Parliament.

2750 What happened to raising taxes for the rich? Well, that I did it, Mr Speaker, when she must have been out having a cup of coffee, because she missed it. Because the taxes we have raised are Cat 2 and HEPSS. Did she miss that? She delivered the most brazenly populist speech in the history of this Parliament. 'What kind of value are you giving to the taxpayer by selling the berths?' Mr Speaker, 100% value is the answer because I told the House that if we sold them we will get £25.5 billion which, as they know, is there or thereabouts the cost of the Marina. So we will get the full value back for the taxpayer.

2760 When we develop affordable homes, we get half the value back when people buy 50/50. Mr Speaker, has she not worked that out? Why did she have to ask me the question when I had given her all the information? 'The GHA waiting lists are huge.' Of course they are; we have just come out of the pandemic and we have to find out how we are going to deal with this. But not just us: the NHS, every public health care system which is free at the point of delivery is going through this huge problem. 'People are alone at home, vulnerable and not looked after,' she told us. Well, Mr Speaker on that one we have an objective measure. Of course, there may be people at home today who are lonely. It happens. But insofar as the reach of the state is concerned, does she know what record she defended when she stood for election in 2013? Does she know what she stood for then, whatever she stands for now? Because the Domiciliary Care Budget that she defended was a few hundred thousand pounds. It is now, in a normal year, £2.2 million; and in the COVID year, £3.2 million per year. That is our investment in people who are at home, vulnerable and not looked after, and that is what we have done for those people.

2770 A 320% increase in a non-COVID year; a 427% increase in people who are vulnerable and at home on their own, lonely in a COVID year – 427%! No wonder that they accuse me of spending lavishly; but on the people who matter the most, on those who are vulnerable and who need care in the home. Do you know what inflation has been in that time? It has been 18%. So we took over from *them* something that was a few hundred thousand pounds, and we put it at £2.2 million. That is a 320% increase. Now, because of COVID it has gone up to 427%, when inflation was 18%. Did she know that the record she was defending was the record of spending a few hundred thousand pounds on people who are vulnerable and lonely at home, and that the people she was attacking are the ones who spent these amounts? Or did she not bother to look at page 235 of the Book? Maybe Mr Clinton is right? Maybe we should not have bothered even to print the first one! (*Interjection*) They say it is half the story, but they do not even look to open it, Mr Speaker.

2785 'When are you properly going to house the people at the Queen's Cinema to proper accommodation? It needs to be done immediately,' she said. Okay, but we did it five years ago, or has she forgotten that as well? Has she forgotten that when we were elected, those people lived in the stone block up at Buena Vista and that we moved them to a three-star hotel, which they criticised us for buying to put them in? We have done it already. But when we announced a new workers' hostel, they were all over us like a rash saying that we should not do it.

2790 'The environment is not a problem on planet Picardo,' she said. Well, Mr Speaker, I really do not know how to answer that. I mean, the party that she stood with was the party that conveyed their Chief Minister around in a Jaguar that cost a few hundred pounds to fill and spewed diesel out the back. We immediately sought to go electric to show that we were committed to the environment. We have done all of the things that we have done – not least, move away from the power station that she defended. In the 2013 General Election when we still had not done the

2795 power station, they wanted to do the other one! In the 2015 General Election, the whole battle royale between Mr Feetham and me was about stopping the LNG, and they said they would go back to a power station on the Upper Rock. That is what she defended. That is what she stood for in 2015.

2800 She said, 'The fight against climate change cannot wait.' But yet in the 2015 Election, the effect of what she was saying was, 'Let's build a diesel power station at the entrance to the Upper Rock.' There are so many contradictions here, that not even Marlene can trust Marlene any more, Mr Speaker. On cannabis, Mr Speaker, she says that the announcements that we made this year, through Mr Cortes, were announcements that we were making because of the economic crisis that we find ourselves in. Where was she when I read the whole of the two pages of my Budget speech in 2019 before COVID was even thought of, which dealt with exactly the same cannabis issue, Mr Speaker? The problem is not planet Picardo, Mr Speaker, the problem is planet Hollywood, Mr Speaker; or planet Marlene – a pointless asteroid which orbits nothing but wanders lonely and irrelevant in space. *[A mobile phone rings]*

2810 There it is calling, Mr Speaker. If she does not believe me, she should look it up. She should put into Google '1010 Marlene', and what will come out on Wikipedia will be the references, pointless asteroid orbiting the sun every five years, and a member of no known asteroid family, all on its own. Although, Mr Speaker, given the choices on her side *major sola que con mala compania*. Although I can see the Leader of the Opposition already machinating with her. 'He has hit you so hard, why do you not you come with me? Let's merge. Look at how he hits you. Come with me ...' *(Laughter)* Another contradiction, Mr Speaker.

2815 'This is the budget of decay, because it marks the beginning of the end.' I think she is right, Mr Speaker. But by the end of what? At the end of her credibility, obviously.

'The Civil Service is in disarray', she said. Those were her words, I checked in her speech. She spent the last election calling them corrupt and now she says that they are in disarray.

2820 'Democracy in Gibraltar is not vibrant. There is no accountability or transparency.' Really, Mr Speaker? When hon. Members come here and give their speeches there is no democracy? When other people say what they want to say, which is what they are perfectly entitled to say. Even writing letters to the Governor which are, frankly, scandalous, and you petition. People can say what they like, that is the beauty of our society, Mr Speaker. But we are also entitled to reply.

2825 How is it that the Government loses the right of free speech and to defend itself? Because if she likes accountability she will like the fact that I treat her like one of the boys – her phrase, not mine – and I go through her speech like I go through their speeches, and I reply with *my* views on the things that she said about *me*. Or is it that there is only to be accountability of the Government and no accountability of the quarter of a million pounds that sits opposite us?

2830 So now she is going to abstain, she said, Mr Speaker. Well, she said, 'They will accuse me of not being consistent.' Mr Speaker, I welcome at least that small sign of self-awareness on her part, that she just cannot make up her mind; and, in politics, you have to make up your mind.

This is what she said in 2017 – and the hon. Members of the Opposition might want to cover their ears as it does not make pleasant listening to for them:

However, I find the Opposition's unprecedented decision to vote against this Budget irresponsible, cynical and completely against the interests of Gibraltarians. Irresponsible, because if it were to take full effect, the consequences to the community would be devastating, paralysing our community in its entirety from our schools to the economy and the central services.

2835 None other than Sir Peter Caruana himself, the GSD's own, erstwhile leader once remarked that it was important for all parliamentarians to vote in favour of a budget, and I quote:

In order not to deprive the Government of funding and the civil servants of their pay. I therefore find this move to be little more than a cosmetic and sterile marketing stunt that smacks more of desperation than it does have a responsible approach to politics. I have decided instead to put the interests of Gibraltarians first. It has been a long-standing tradition for politicians in this House in an act of statesmanship and a responsibility to vote in favour of the Budget even if, as in this case, with this one, they have honest doubts about them. I will not deploy gimmicks which

undermine the welfare and civil servants and basic public services, if only symbolically. I will not allow my vote, meant to represent only those interests, to be abducted in this way. I will therefore honour the long-standing convention and vote in favour of the Budget notwithstanding the many criticisms I have previously made.

Tough. Tougher than me!

This is what she said in 2018 – hon. Members had better put the ear plugs in again:

In the light of my interpretation of the Budget in broad terms, I have voiced my criticisms today unequivocally. However, I will be voting in favour of the Budget. The GSD opposition were opportunistic last year and opportunistic again this year. When we vote in the Appropriation Bill, we vote to maintain and fund our essential services. I may have all the reservations in the world, but I cannot vote with the cynicism of the GSD Opposition who seem to want to strip back spending and cause political mischief in this way.'

This is what she said in 2019:

Mr Speaker has already indicated and true to parliamentary convention, I will be voting for the Appropriation Bill despite my reservations, as described, in order to signal my desire to not grind services to a halt.

2840 Shorter every time. So consistency is not her forte, Mr Speaker. Not even Marlene can rely on  
Marlene any more, Mr Speaker, because what she is going to do today, by her own definition, is  
irresponsible, cynical and completely against the interests of Gibraltar; and in this case, Mr  
Speaker, not because *I* say it, but because *she* says it. Not even Marlene can rely on Marlene any  
more. What is clear, Mr Speaker, is that I am from Mars and she is from Venus, obviously.  
2845 interstellar opposites; galaxies apart, obviously. She is from the planet Silver Spoon and I am from  
the planet Working Class.

I will continue, Mr Speaker, to deliver for those who are really working-class people, because  
when she attacks us, she needs to ask herself what has she done for prosperity in Gibraltar? What  
has she done to make the Gibraltar that we have today? At the end of the day the GSLP and, in its  
2850 time, the GSD have delivered prosperity, and the AACR. But she cannot take credit for that if she  
does not want to be equated to her dad. She has every right to come here and say what she likes  
for herself, of course she has. But we have every right to defend our record too.

The dictatorship, Mr Speaker, or the negative effect on freedom of speech is the suggestion  
that *they* can attack us and that we cannot defend ourselves. If she wants to play with the big  
boys – and she used that phrase, not me, because she was the one who used the 'boy' analogy –  
2855 she will have to prepare to be tackled. Home truths. She lost in the by-election; she lost in 2015  
and in 2019. She is plausible as an actor, but she does not have what it takes. She accused me of  
being a second-rate actor so if I go back and say, 'Well, look, if we are judging each other as actors,  
I can say that you are plausible, but you do not have what it takes.'

She accuses us of flip-flopping, but she is the one who changes her tricky position whenever it  
2860 is convenient. She is a professional flip-flop, Mr Speaker. Even Marlene cannot trust Marlene any  
more. She is shallow, shallow, shallow. But, Mr Speaker, in the words of that song, the *Shallow*  
song, she was off the deep-end and we watched her as she hit the ground with this speech. It was  
a political train crash that would embarrass anybody capable of shame, even ignoring that there  
is a recognised medical condition known as the male menopause.

2865 But, Mr Speaker, this year as they all now wash their hands and they leave it to us, we on this  
side of the House will not let Gibraltar down. We will not leave Gibraltar without an Appropriation,  
because we are a Government that does what needs to be done. They are an Opposition that says  
what sounds good, full-stop. *We* act in the best interests of our people; *they* act in the best  
interests of their parties. We care *only* about our people; they care only about their votes. For us,  
2870 *every penny counts*; for them it is just about counting votes.

So, Mr Speaker, at this time of unity, when our people need to see us working together to  
develop growth and pay for the ravages of COVID, she and they are united only to attack us and  
to talk down our economy. At this time of hope for recovery they came to talk about decay, in her  
case, and austerity in their case. Pandemic and Brexit behind us it is time for us, Mr Speaker, to

2875 make the difference; and we will. Because there is a big difference between not being well off, and being poor. There is a big difference between a lack of affluence, and hardship. There is a big difference between wanting more, and needing more.

No one in Gibraltar will have less than the minimum wage, and our minimum wage is higher than Germany. That is the reality and we have to make this debate real and actual. Mr Speaker, 2880 nothing I have heard in the third-rate speeches from this third-rate Opposition changed my mind, especially from the leader that came fourth in the ranking of party leaders at the last election, and third in the rankings of his own party.

When they talk about the culture of entitlement, Mr Speaker, it is a brilliant discovery that needs to be tackled. When we talk about stopping the culture of the spoilt child of Europe, it is a 2885 terrible thing that we should not have referred to. If that is all they have, Mr Speaker, I am confident in commending the Bill to the House again and calling out to our fellow Gibraltarians that in this debate, in replying to hon. Members opposite, I have been careful to demonstrate how each one of the seven bottles operate thoughts through the weight of the hubris of their presentation here. I make no judgement about the fitness of any of them to govern.

2890 Ten years ago, I was told that I was not fit to govern and yet a decade later I am still delivering speeches from this place. We are not the judges of the fitness of each other, the public will decide that. But because they have made themselves commentators of *our* abilities, I have replied in respect of their own. In the end, Mr Speaker, the public will decide. Of course they will, when that general election comes.

2895 But today, Mr Speaker, as I commend the Bill to the House, I assure everyone in Gibraltar that every public servant will be paid and every public service will be maintained, thanks *only* to the votes of the GSLP Liberal Government on this side of the House. I commend the Bill to the House. (*Banging on desks*)

2900 Mr Speaker, I wonder whether it might make sense, given the hour, to recess for 15 minutes until quarter to six?

**Mr Speaker:** The House will now recess to quarter to six.

*The House recessed at 5.25 p.m.  
and resumed its sitting at 5.47 p.m.*

**Appropriation Bill 2021 –  
Debate concluded –  
Second reading approved**

**Mr Speaker:** I now put the question, which is that a Bill for an Act to appropriate sums of money to the service of the year ending on 31st day of March 2022 be read a second time.

2905 **Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo):** Mr Speaker, I call a division.

**Mr Speaker:** The Chief Minister has called for a division, so we will need to vote individually.

*A division was called for and voting resulted as follows:*

**FOR**

Hon. P J Balban  
Hon. Sir J J Bossano  
Hon. Prof. J E Cortes  
Hon. V Daryanani  
Hon. Dr J J Garcia  
Hon. A J Isola  
Hon. G H Licudi  
Hon. S E Linares  
Hon. F R Picardo  
Hon. Miss S J Sacramento

**AGAINST**

Hon. K Azopardi  
Hon. D J Bossino  
Hon. R M Clinton  
Hon. D A Feetham  
Hon. E J Phillips  
Hon. E J Reyes

**ABSTENTION**

Hon. Ms M D Hassan Nahon

**Mr Speaker:** The result of this division is that there are 10 ayes, 6 noes and 1 abstaining, so the Bill is passed by Government majority.

2910

**Clerk:** The Appropriation Act 2021.

**Appropriation Bill 2021 –  
Committee Stage and Third Reading to be taken at this sitting**

**Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo):** Mr Speaker, I beg to give notice that the Committee Stage and Third Reading of the Bill be taken later today, if all hon. Members agree.

2915 **Mr Speaker:** Do all hon. Members agree that the Committee Stage and Third Reading of the Bill be taken today?

**Members:** Aye.

**Supplementary Appropriation (2016/2017) Bill 2019 –  
First Reading approved**

**Clerk:** We continue with Bills for First and Second Reading.

2920 We commence with a Bill for an Act to appropriate sums of money to the service of the year ended 31st day of March 2017. The Hon. the Chief Minister.

**Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo):** Mr Speaker, I have the honour to move that the Bill for an Act to appropriate sums of money for the service of the year ended 31st March 2017 be read a first time.  
2925

**Mr Speaker:** I now put the question, which is that a Bill for an Act to appropriate sums of money to the service of the year ended 31st day of March 2017 be read a first time. Those in favour? **(Members: Aye.)** Those against? Carried.

2930

**Clerk:** The Supplementary Appropriation (2016/2017) Act 2019.

**Supplementary Appropriation (2016/2017) Bill 2019 –  
Second Reading approved**

**Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo):** Mr Speaker, I have the honour to move that the Bill now be read a second time.

2935 The purpose of this Bill is to appropriate further sums of money to meet Government expenditure incurred during the year ended 31st March 2017. This Bill is therefore the annual Supplementary Appropriation Bill required to provide appropriation cover retrospectively for the outturn figures for financial year 2016-17.

2940 The aim of Government has been, always, and continues to be, to present any supplementary appropriation at the earliest opportunity. As I have explained previously to the House, the exigencies of Brexit have, unfortunately, not allowed us to find either the ministerial or the parliamentary time to deal with this and other pressing matters. Although it has not been possible to discuss the Bill itself any earlier, Members of the Opposition have nevertheless had the opportunity to view for themselves not just the level but the areas where additional funding is required, in the first instance, from the forecast outturn figures for 2016 and 2017 as they  
2945 appeared in the Estimates Book for 2017-18, and subsequently, and more accurately, from the actual figures for that year, as published in the Estimates Book 2018-19. So, the additional funding requirements have, in effect, been made available to hon. Members since the publication of the draft estimates for 2018-19, when they had the first opportunity to debate the additional expenditure requirements. Consequently, the details of this matter have, in effect, been discussed  
2950 during the course of the 2017-18 appropriation debate.

Mr Speaker, as the House will note, we have aligned the Supplementary Appropriation Bills for the other years for discussion during the course of this session of Parliament. The House will indulge me a little as I comment on these collectively for the purposes of comparison, albeit each Bill will be dealt with separately.

2955 We are about to seek consent for additional amounts spent during the periods 2016-17, 2017-18 and 2018-19, totalling £35.8 million. These figures, viewed in isolation, seem large. However, they need to be put in context. The total estimate for departmental expenditure spent over the three-year period was £1.471 billion, or some 2.4% is what we are talking about as the overspend during the period, and that, of course, in my view, is relatively small.

2960 During the course of the debate, we have heard the Opposition make claims of overspending by the Government in respect of our expenditure. What this shows is that, yes, there has been an

overspend, but it is relatively small in comparison with overall departmental expenditure and reflects a control over expenditure that is, frankly, worthy of some praise to those controlling officers who take their functions seriously, as the numbers demonstrate. Indeed, if one looks at this year-per-year, what you find is that we are actually fine-tuning the Government's level of control over expenditure to keep within budget. So, the overspend in 2016-17 was £18.7 million on a departmental budget of £468.1 million, some 3.99%; in 2017-18, it was £8.3 million on the departmental overspend of £490.3 million some 1.7%; and in 2018-19, the overspend was £8.8 million on a departmental budget of £512.2 million, some 1.7%.

Mr Speaker, to allay the concern that this is just fiscal prudence with recurrent expenditure, let me turn to Improvement and Development Fund (I&DF) supplementary appropriations and the cause of these. Over the three years in question – 2016-17, 2017-18 and 2018-19 – we are seeking supplementary appropriation of some £52 million. In the context of an overall I&DF expenditure of £197.8 million, this might seem a lot, but one needs to delve into the numbers. Overall, spend in those three years was in the region of £193.5 million, so why, you may ask, is a supplementary appropriation of £52 million required? The answer lies in our estimate in revenue for each of those years.

For 2016-17 we received £26.9 million less in revenue into the I&DF than we had projected whilst also spending some £13.9 million less than we estimated, and for 2017-18 we received £25.8 million less in revenue in the I&DF than we had projected whilst also spending some £2.3 million less than we had estimated. Whereas for 2018-19 we received £1 million less in revenue than we had anticipated but spent £11.8 million more than we had anticipated. So, as you can see, Mr Speaker, over the three-year period our spending in total was less than we had provided for, and the reason for the supplementary appropriation is, in essence, a large shortfall in the first two years of predicted revenue for the I&DF.

Mr Speaker, it is clear that, as a Government, we can seek to control expenditure, but we are pretty powerless to make revenue happen when we estimate that it is going to happen and it does not, in effect, happen. In the scheme of things, this shows that our overall management of recurrent and capital expenditure is actually pretty good and lays to rest some of the criticisms over lack of budgetary control by the Members opposite. Sometimes, numbers speak louder than words.

Hon. Members should also know that in the case of the £18.7 million required to cover the additional expenditure incurred under the Consolidated Fund, this represents the amount required in addition to the supplementary provision of £9 million and is already included in the approved Estimates Book under head 47, which is the supplementary provision head.

As has always been the case, a full breakdown of the £28 million – that is to say the £18.7 million and the £9 million of reallocations to be made from head 47 – will be tabled in the House at the next available session of Parliament. This will provide hon. Members with a full and detailed breakdown of the heads and subheads for which this supplementary provision has been applied. The other components of this Bill – that is to say the amount required in respect of the transfer from the Government's surplus and their contribution to the I&DF – are self-explanatory.

I commend the Bill to the House.

**Mr Speaker:** Before I put the question, does any hon. Member wish to speak on the general principles and merits of the Bill? The Hon. Roy Clinton.

**Hon. R M Clinton:** Thank you, Mr Speaker.

I am grateful to the Government for finally bringing these Bills to the House, as I have repeatedly requested. It should, ideally, be as soon as possible after the financial year. Today, we have three Bills in front of us and the Chief Minister has rolled up his comments in respect of all three in his contribution just now. I will make an observation on the 2017 Appropriation and then I will make a specific contribution on the 2018 Bill when we come to discuss that one, because it is specific to it.

3015 Generically, historically we have had a problem with these supplementaries and the point I have made in the past is that a lot of the supplementary expenditure on the Consolidated Fund is put through, for example in 2017, head 47, which is the supplementary provision. I have a technical problem with that, in that, in my understanding of the way the Constitution is written, we are meant to get a breakdown of all the supplementary expenditure per head of expenditure, instead of which the Government has fallen into the habit of putting it all through supplemental.

3020 I was expecting to debate this particular Bill a long time ago and, in fact, I had prepared something in respect of it and it speaks to the question of how the supplementary head is dealt with.

3025 Mr Speaker, I beg your indulgence. I will quote from *Hansard* from 2008. In the debate of 3rd June 2008, the Father of the House said this about the supplementary funding head, which at that time was called 15B. He said, and I quote:

Let me put it to the Government my understanding of what this subhead should be used for, given that I was the one who introduced it initially. The purpose of the subhead from the day it was brought in, was in fact, to do away with the need that there used to be before this subhead existed, to keep on coming back with Supplementary Appropriation Bills ... two or three times during the course of the year, simply because in every year and in every budget there are unforeseen circumstances requiring either additional expenditure or totally new expenditure.

He goes on, and I think I will quote it:

Look, the guys in the Treasury do not have a crystal ball so that they can identify every single thing that every department is going to need in a budget of £250 million.

– we have come a long way since then –

So, the subhead was there to provide that flexibility. It has been used for that purpose until now. That is to say, to meet unforeseen, additional or new requirements.

3030 And so, Mr Speaker, Sir Joe made it quite clear in his contribution in June 2008, first of all, that the supplementary provisions are meant to be used during the year and not as a head for supplementary appropriations later; and then secondly – and it is perhaps pertinent now, when we talk about when the supplementary appropriation is meant to come to the House. In his time, they used to come to the House two or three times a year for supplementaries, so when the Chief Minister says the Constitution is silent about when to come with a supplementary, what it says is produce the Bill but not actually when it should be heard. The Father of the House was quite clear  
3035 that in his time it was understood that if you had an unexpected expenditure you needed approval, and if you needed approval you came to the House, and he created the supplementary buffer to avoid the bureaucratic requirement of having to come each time you were a penny over or a pound over, and he gave himself some headroom.

3040 But again, that goes to show that that headroom is only there for use during the year. I still find it objectionable that the supplementary head in each of these Bills is used to cover the supplementary expenditure for the whole Consolidated Fund and not itemised. Secondly, Sir Joe makes it quite clear that it was not unusual in those days to come back repeatedly to the House during the year to cover the supplementary appropriations, and not indeed wait for three years for it to be debated. So, I would urge the Government, if it is a practice that has fallen into  
3045 abeyance, to follow that practice – which to me, as a non-lawyer, is common sense – that when you have supplementary appropriations, and if the buffer that Sir Joe created does not cover it, you do come to the House for authorisation. Otherwise, we have three years' worth of unauthorised expenditure.

3050 The Chief Minister made the point earlier today when he said, in his reply, 'We voted for Sir Peter's supplementary appropriations, and thank God we voted in favour of the Budget, because otherwise ...' Otherwise, what, Mr Speaker? That is, in fact, a very good question, because there

are two Supplementary Bills here that relate to prior periods before the last General Election. What would have happened if there had been a different Government? Or what would have happened if that Government had said, ‘Well, actually, Mr Speaker, we are not going to vote in favour of the supplementaries?’ That would probably have provoked a constitutional crisis, because it would have been contrary to the provisions of the Constitution. There would have been expenditure incurred which had not been approved by Parliament, and where would that have left the Chief Minister?

And so, Mr Speaker, just as a matter of good practice and sensible conduct of business, I would sincerely urge the Government not to find itself in this position again. It does not do this House any good to have to approve supplementary appropriations from a different parliament, where we could have a completely different set of people in this Chamber being asked to approve expenditure from a parliament that may not have any representatives here. It is just not good practice and it is not good governance.

So, although I am thankful to see these Bills before the House today, I would again urge the Government to be a little bit more proactive in making sure there is time in the parliamentary timetable to hear these Bills. Yes, we have had Brexit, no doubts, but as I made the point before, the Minister for the Environment has brought countless Bills to this House in the same period and we have had all sorts of other finance Bills, in terms of financial services. These Bills – which are not exactly doorstops, they are not the Finance Bill, with the 500 pages, that we had – could be done and tackled quite easily. So I would again appeal to the Government that, in future, it reverts to what would have been seen as good practice in Sir Joe’s time and bring the Bills on a regular basis and in good time.

Mr Speaker, that is what I have to say in general about these three Bills, that I have an issue with the supplementaries – the way the supplementary expenditure has gone through, which is the point I made before; and I have an issue also with the fact that these Bills have come to the House so late. That is what I will say on the appropriation for 2017. When we come to the appropriation for 2018, I have a very specific point that I need to make in respect of the Improvement and Development Fund.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**Mr Speaker:** Does any other hon. Member wish to speak on the general principles and merits of the Bill?

The Hon. the Chief Minister.

**Hon. Chief Minister:** Mr Speaker, I am grateful to the hon. Gentleman for rolling up his generic point in respect of the three Bills, and I await what he has to say on the I&DF for 2018.

I am told by the Father of the House that what he did was roll up the two different heads that there were, one which dealt with salaries and the other with expenditure, into one head. Certainly by the time I was here in this House what we had was annual publication of Supplementary Appropriation Bills, which were dealt with after the end of the financial year in each case, and the history that I have taken the hon. Gentleman through in the context of our wider debate, shows that in some instances even the publication of those Bills took some considerable number of years. I do not need to remind him, but I did tell him that in 1997, 1998 and 1999 they were not published until 2000, so there was not even the monthly allocation necessary every few months, there was actually not even anything done for a number of years.

Mr Speaker, we are going to continue with the practice that he urges upon us and with which we agree, which is not to go back to the way it used to be done when we used to come here every few months, but to try to come back at least annually, with alacrity, and within a period of the end of the financial year in respect of which we are seeking a supplementary. Not because there is a constitutional issue with coming later, because I explained to him in great detail that there is no time limit under the constitution, but because we think it is good practice. We have fallen behind in that good practice for the reasons I explained to him, but we are not the only ones who have

3105 fallen behind in that good practice, because I have been able to show him that they did that too;  
and if that is an indication of a lack of good governance, then he is pointing the finger of a lack of  
good governance also to the party with which he is sitting, for reasons that I have explained in  
greater detail.

The hon. Gentleman asks what would happen in the eventuality that a new Government were  
not to approve the supplementary expenditure of a previous Government because there had been  
3110 a change of government. Well, as I showed him, we approved their supplementary expenditure  
after a change of government, with no difficulty, because we had voted in favour of the Budget  
and it was no stretch to vote in favour of the supplementary. And he said, 'Well, in those  
circumstances, if a government did not approve the supplementary expenditure of a previous  
administration, there would be a constitutional crisis, and what would that mean for the Chief  
3115 Minister?'

Well, what would that mean for the former Chief Minister, I guess, because it would be his  
expenditure that would not be approved. It would hardly be a great constitutional crisis for the  
incumbent, because all that would happen is that he would leave uncovered the expenditure of  
the previous administration, although it would be uncovered in the context of the Constitution  
3120 now operating. In the context of that, of course, a new government has to agree to publish, as a  
Government Bill, a Supplementary Appropriation Bill that has not been dealt with. So, when I was  
elected in 2011, in December, I had to give an instruction to publish the Supplementary  
Appropriation Bill which had been left on the Order Paper and not dealt with by the former  
administration, and it was published as a Government Bill.

The more interesting question, on which constitutional scholars might like to ruminate for a  
few months before giving us a view, is what happens if a Supplementary Appropriation Bill falls  
on dissolution and the next Chief Minister instructs that it should not be republished? Then, there  
would not be a constitutional crisis because the new Chief Minister would not have failed to pass  
the Supplementary Appropriation Bill. The previous Chief Minister would find that an  
3130 Appropriation Bill that he caused to be published but perhaps not moved, if it has not had its First  
Reading or Second Reading – it could have been through some of its changes or none – would be  
left unpassed.

So, Mr Speaker, I do not think things are quite as straightforward as the hon. Gentleman would  
have us believe, and neither does the Constitution say the things the hon. Gentleman says it says,  
3135 for the reasons I have already outlined more extensively in my contribution on this year's  
Appropriation Bill. But he can rest assured that we do wish to, ideally, bring these Bills as soon as  
possible and deal with them as soon as possible, if it is not because of a crisis like Brexit or COVID  
having delayed us as they have.

3140 **Mr Speaker:** I now put the question, which is that Bill for an Act to appropriate sums of money  
to the service of the year ended 31st day of March 2017 be read a second time. Those in favour?  
(**Several Members:** Aye.) Those against? (**A Member:** No.) Carried. (*Interjection*)

3145 **Hon Member:** We will be going against.

**Mr Speaker:** Are you are going against? I see.

**Hon. Chief Minister:** Sorry, Mr Speaker, did they vote against?

3150 **Mr Speaker:** The Second Reading is, then, passed by Government majority.

**Clerk:** The Supplementary Appropriation (2016/2017) Act 2019.

**Supplementary Appropriation (2016/2017) Bill 2019 –  
Committee Stage and Third Reading to be taken at this sitting**

**Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo):** Mr Speaker, I beg to give notice that the Committee Stage and Third Reading of the Bill be taken today, if all hon. Members agree.

3155

**Mr Speaker:** Do all hon. Members agree that the Committee Stage and Third Reading of the Bill be taken today?

**Members:** Aye.

**Supplementary Appropriation (2017/2018) Bill 2019 –  
First Reading approved**

3160

**Mr Speaker:** A Bill for an Act to appropriate sums of money to the service of the year ended 31st day of March 2018, the Hon. the Chief Minister.

3165

**Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo):** Mr Speaker, I have the honour to move that a Bill for an Act to appropriate sums of money to the service of the year ended 31st March 2018 be read a first time.

**Mr Speaker:** I now put the question, which is that a Bill for an Act to appropriate sums of money to the service of the year ended 31st day of March 2018 be read a first time. Those in favour? (**Members:** Aye.) Those against? Carried.

3170

**Clerk:** The Supplementary Appropriation (2017/2018) Act 2019.

**Supplementary Appropriation (2017/2018) Bill 2019 –  
Second Reading approved**

**Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo):** Mr Speaker, I would just advise the House that when we get to the Committee Stage and Third Reading, I will be moving amendments to change the date of the Acts as passed because the dates of the Acts as passed will have to read 2021.

3175

Mr Speaker, I have the honour to move that the Bill be now read a second time.

The purpose of this Bill is appropriate further sums of money to meet Government expenditure incurred during the financial year ended 31st March 2018. This Bill is therefore the annual Supplementary Appropriation Bill required to provide appropriation to cover retrospectively for the outturn figures for financial year 2017-18. As I have explained in my previous intervention although we have not had the opportunity to discuss this Bill earlier, Members of the Opposition will nevertheless have the opportunity to again view for themselves the level and areas in which this additional funding is required.

3180

Initially, the forecast outturn figures for 2017-18, which appeared in the Estimates Book for 2018-19, and subsequently and more accurately from the actual figures for that year as published in the Estimates Book for 2019-20. The details of this Supplementary Appropriation Bill have therefore, in effect, been discussed during the course of the 2018-19 Appropriation debate.

3185

Hon. Members should note that in the case of the £8.3 million required to cover the additional expenditure incurred in the Consolidated Fund, this represents the amount required in addition to the supplementary provision of £9 million that is already included in the approved Estimates

3190 Book, under head 52 which is the supplementary provision head. A full breakdown of the £17 million, that is to say the £8.3 million and the £9 million of reallocations to be made from head 52 will be tabled in the House at the next available session of Parliament, giving Hon. Members a full and detailed breakdown of the heads and subheads, for which this supplementary provision has been applied. Other components of the Bill are self-explanatory.

3195 Mr Speaker, just dealing with the hon. Member's point earlier if he will allow me, because it might be helpful for him, the Financial Secretary suggests to me that in the circumstances where the Bills are not approved as he was suggesting, in other words if there is a vote to either not approve a Supplementary Appropriation Bill by a later Government, or if that Bill were not to be passed and not to be published again as a result of dissolution, the Principal Auditor would probably feature that expenditure in the Book of the amounts that we are talking about in respect of each of those years as 'unauthorised expenditure'. That would probably be the extent of the constitutional crisis that would have to be dealt with. I hope that is helpful to him as an additional view.

3205 **Mr Speaker:** Before I put the question, does any hon. Member wish to speak on the general principles and merits of the Bill? The Hon. Roy Clinton.

3210 **Hon. R M Clinton:** Mr Speaker, I am grateful to the Chief Minister's last contribution. I am certainly not a constitutional lawyer, but I am certainly interested to see how it would work in practice.

Mr Speaker, turning specifically to the Bill for the Supplementary Appropriation for the year ended 31st March 2018: in this one, Mr Speaker, I have a slight quandary in the supplementary appropriation for the public undertakings under clause 5(1):

[shall] pay out of the Improvement and Development Fund ... for the year ended 31st March 2018, a further sum not exceeding £30,111,000.

And there is a breakdown of that under Part 4 on page 995 of the Bill.

3215 Before I go into that, Mr Speaker, of course, all the comments I made before about the way head 52 is used and stands in respect of this Bill too.

3220 But, Mr Speaker, my query on this particular Bill is that on Part 4, Public Undertakings of Gibraltar Development Corporation £30 million, I think we all know what that is. That is, in fact, £30 million that was subscribed for shares in the Gibraltar International Bank, if my memory serves me right. Probably the A-shares, I suspect.

3225 But, Mr Speaker, I have with me the official approved estimate for 2018-19, which has got the various outturns, including Appendix B for the Gibraltar Development Corporation, for the sake of reference page 183. My issue is this, Mr Speaker, in the capital account it says here, 'Capital expenditure, purchase of shares, £30 million'. But on the capital revenue, Mr Speaker, it says 'Loan from Government-owned companies, £30 million.' I remember distinctly, Mr Speaker, asking questions at the time, and I think we had some discussion as to the origin of that money and whether the Improvement and Development Fund had the power to borrow. So, Mr Speaker, the Improvement and Development Fund actually borrowed for itself £30 million, which were then expended on shares.

3230 Now it may be, Mr Speaker, that technically under Part 4 the £30 million needs to appear as an expenditure of public undertakings, but certainly under 5(1), it has not been proven that the Development Fund would actually be spending £30,111,000. Because the £30 million, Mr Speaker, did not come from the Improvement and Development Fund, but in fact was a loan from a Government company which I assume had nothing to do with the Improvement and Development Fund.

3235 So I just wonder, Mr Speaker, if the Chief Minister could address that point because, although technically I guess he could argue under 5(1) it is to authorise paying out *up to* £30 million, and of

3240 course the £30 million has come in by way of a loan from somewhere else, he does not need to actually expend the £30 million. But in fact, if that was to be knocked out, in fact that particular clause 5(1) should perhaps read £111,000 rather than £30,111,000, because the £30 million, Mr Speaker, will not be coming from the Improvement and Development Fund.

3245 So that, Mr Speaker, is my contribution in respect of the Bill for this particular year. And I have just noticed Mr Speaker, I may have one complimentary comment to make about the next Bill for 2019 in terms of presentation. But I would be grateful if the Chief Minister could address this point because it may that he need not actually amend the Bill because the Bill allows expenditure *up to* £30,111,000, but obviously he does not need to go there. But I would venture to suggest, Mr Speaker, that the way the Gibraltar Development Corporation have funded the purchase of those shares in the Gibraltar International Bank that that money in fact did not originate from the Improvement and Development Fund.

3250 Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**Mr Speaker:** Does any other hon. Member wish to speak on the general principles and merits of the Bill?

3255 The Hon. the Chief Minister.

**Hon. Chief Minister:** Mr Speaker, on this side of the House, we are trying to understand what it is that he has proposed. We do not think that we agree with him and we think that actually the reason that he identified would be *why* we would argue it was there is exactly why it *was* there, although he seems to be arguing against himself as to why it is that we put it there. He said ‘the achievements that might argue that’. Mr Speaker, we do not think we argue, we think that is actually why we did it. So, Mr Speaker, I am afraid I cannot help him any further. We will look at the *Hansard* of what he has said to see if there is any issue that he has raised which gives us any cause for concern, but we really do not think that there is any such cause for concern.

3265 Additionally, Mr Speaker, I would just gently say to him that, given that he voted against the Appropriation, I am surprised he is going into so much detail in respect of the Supplementary Appropriation, which he also intends to vote against. So he is looking in great detail at what it is that we are doing in order to tell us that he does not agree, Mr Speaker. So he will understand that I would rather just look at this in the context of the *Hansard* and inform him if there is anything that concerns us, rather than waste the House’s time further today.

3270 Indeed, as we start to look at the next Committee Stage also, Mr Speaker, if that is the attitude they are going to take, they are going to be looking at all of this in great detail in order to vote against it. I will also just gently note, Mr Speaker, that the hon. Lady voted to abstain in the context of the Bill that we have just passed, which was a Bill to provide Supplementary Appropriation for a Budget that she voted in favour of, so I would be very interested to see how she is going to vote now.

3275 Therefore, Mr Speaker, as I commend the Bill to the House this time, I would also call a division in respect of this vote.

**Mr Speaker:** I now put the question which is that a Bill for an Act to appropriate sums of money to the service of the year ended 31st day of March 2018 be read a second time. Division has been called.

*A division was called for and voting resulted as follows:*

**FOR**

Hon. P J Balban  
Hon. Sir J J Bossano  
Hon. Prof. J E Cortes  
Hon. V Daryanani  
Hon. Dr J J Garcia  
Hon. A J Isola  
Hon. G H Licudi  
Hon. S E Linares  
Hon. F R Picardo  
Hon. Miss S J Sacramento

**AGAINST**

Hon. K Azopardi  
Hon. D J Bossino  
Hon. R M Clinton  
Hon. D A Feetham  
Hon. E J Phillips  
Hon. E J Reyes

**ABSTENTION**

Hon. Ms M D Hassan Nahon

**Mr Speaker:** There are 10 votes in favour of the Second Reading of the Bill, 6 against and 1 abstention; so the Bill can be read a second time – or the approval has been granted and the Bill has been read a second time by Government majority.

3285

**Clerk:** The Supplementary Appropriation Act (2017/2018) Act 2019.

**Supplementary Appropriation (2017/2018) Bill 2019 –  
Committee Stage and Third Reading to be taken at this sitting**

**Hon. Chief Minister:** Mr Speaker, I have the honour to move, sorry, that – this is the 2019 one. Mr Speaker, I have the honour to move that a Bill for an Act to appropriate sums of money to the service of the year ended 31st day of March 2019 be read –

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**Mr Speaker:** If I could interrupt, it is the begging time, Chief Minister.

**Hon. Chief Minister:** Sorry?

3295

**Mr Speaker:** When you say, ‘I beg to give notice’.

**Hon. Chief Minister:** Oh, the earlier one. Sorry. Where am I? (*Interjection*) I see what the hon. Member means. Sorry.

3300

I beg to give notice of the Committee Stage and Third Reading of the Bill be taken today, if all hon. Members agree. That is the one. Thank you.

**Mr Speaker:** Do all hon. Members agree that the Committee Stage and Third Reading of the Bill be taken today?

3305

**Members:** Aye.

**Supplementary Appropriation (2018/2019) Bill 2019 –  
First Reading approved**

**Mr Speaker:** A Bill for an Act to appropriate sums of money to the service of the year ended 31st day of March 2019. The Hon. the Chief Minister.

3310

**Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo):** Mr Speaker, I have the honour to move that the Bill for an Act to appropriate sums of money to the service of the year ended 31st day of March 2019 be read a first time.

**Mr Speaker:** I now put the question, which is a Bill for an act to appropriate sums of money to the service of the year ended 31st day of March 2019 be read a first time. Those in favour? (**Members:** Aye) Those against? Carried.

3315

**Clerk:** The Supplementary Appropriation (2018/2019) Act 2020.

**Supplementary Appropriation (2018/2019) Bill 2020 –  
Second Reading approved**

**Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo):** Mr Speaker, I have the honour to move that the Bill now be read a second time.

3320 Mr Speaker, the purpose of this Bill is to appropriate further sums of money to meet Government expenditure incurred during the financial year ended 31st March 2019. This Bill is therefore the annual Supplementary Appropriation Bill required to provide appropriation cover retrospectively for the outturn figures for the financial year 2018-19.

3325 Hon. Members should note that, in the case of the £8.8 million required to cover the additional expenditure incurred under the Consolidated Fund, this represents the amount required in addition to the supplementary provision of £9 million that is already included in the Approved Estimates Book under head 54, which is the supplementary provision head. A full breakdown of the £18 million, that is to say the £8.8 million and the £9 million of reallocations to be made from head 54 will be tabled in the House at the next available session of Parliament, giving the hon. Members a full and detailed breakdown of the heads and subheads for which the supplementary provision has been applied. The other components of this Bill are self-explanatory.

3330

**Mr Speaker:** Before I put the question, does any hon. Member wish to speak on the general principles and merits of the Bill? The Hon. Roy Clinton.

3335 **Hon. R M Clinton:** Thank you, Mr Speaker.

3340 As I say, the comments I made about the head 54, the way the supplementary provision is used, stand; but I would actually like to compliment the way on the Explanatory Memorandum that we do have appearing now an actual breakdown of the Improvement and Development Fund expenditure between head 101 and head 102. I think it is useful to the House if that continues to be provided in future years as it was perhaps in times past. It does help the House understand what the additional capital expenditure is and I commend the Government for introducing it in this way this year, and I hope it continues in future years. But of course, I would also say that our position on the general principle will be the same and obviously we will be voting against.

3345 **Mr Speaker:** Hon. the Chief Minister.

**Hon. Chief Minister:** Mr Speaker, I am grateful to the hon. Gentleman for his positive comments in respect of the Explanatory Memorandum.

3350 Mr Speaker, I note that in respect of the earlier Bill, again the hon. Lady abstained in respect of the Supplementary Appropriation for a Budget that she had voted in favour of. But, Mr Speaker, what I find utterly remarkable is that the Hon. Mr Clinton has made such a meal of these Supplementary Appropriation Bills, he has mentioned them so many times. In 20 minutes we have got through them and heard him say that he has one or two issues and that is it. I mean, all of this supplementary appropriation or failure to deal with the supplementary appropriation, is really  
3355 these 20 minutes of him having the opportunity to once again raise tiny issues, which are issues of detail, which I welcome that he should raise, Mr Speaker. But what really does, I think, demonstrate where the Opposition are in respect of appropriations generally, is that they spend,

3360 in *his* case, months or maybe even longer calling for these Bills to be dealt with, calling for them to be debated. He raises one point in respect of one, and one point in respect of another (*Interjections*) and then he votes against, Mr Speaker. It must be the only time in parliamentary history that a Member *calls* for a Bill to be brought, and alleges breach of the constitution of the failure of the Bill to be brought in order that he can vote against!

3365 So if anybody ever needed evidence, Mr Speaker, that the hon. Gentleman is ‘Mr Negative’, as I called him during the course of the earlier debate, this is it. I mean, he has really expended a *huge* amount of energy and has made a huge part of his speech all about the failure to bring these Bills, so that he could signify in his case – and in the case of the Members of the official Opposition – their continued ‘No’ in the vote, Mr Speaker. Well at least the next Supplementary Appropriation Bill will be a very interesting one indeed because it will be the one which will be a supplementary in respect of the Budget for which they voted ‘Yes’. In other words, the  
3370 supplementary expenditure of March 2019-20 over that period. Let’s see how they take that, Mr Speaker.

3375 But it has not stopped the hon. Lady that she should – I know that she may be reading something, but I am addressing her – she has decided to vote contrary to the vote that she expressed at the time that we voted on the main Budget that we are now seeking appropriation for in order to complete the supplementary appropriation.

3380 Mr Speaker, if it is helpful to the hon. Gentleman, I think I have got an explanation now in respect of the £30 million, which is I am told that because there had been no provision made and no estimate in respect of the period 2016-17, 2017-18 for those shares, when the call came for that money it is for that reason that it had to be put in specifically because it had not been estimated as a cost. I am quite happy, Mr Speaker, for him to have a conversation with the Financial Secretary outside, to better explain the reason why it was felt appropriate to do it in that way, so it can be seen in the supplementary appropriation.

3385 Mr Speaker, I commend the Bill to the House and, for the reasons I have indicated earlier, I would be grateful if a division could be called on this vote.

**Mr Speaker:** I now put the question, which is that a Bill for an Act to appropriate sums of money to the service of the year ended 31st day of March 2019 be read a second time.

*A division was called for and voting resulted as follows:*

**FOR**

Hon. P J Balban  
Hon. Sir J J Bossano  
Hon. Prof. J E Cortes  
Hon. V Daryanani  
Hon. Dr J J Garcia  
Hon. A J Isola  
Hon. G H Licudi  
Hon. S E Linares  
Hon. F R Picardo  
Hon. Miss S J Sacramento

**AGAINST**

Hon. K Azopardi  
Hon. D J Bossino  
Hon. R M Clinton  
Hon. D A Feetham  
Hon. E J Phillips  
Hon. E J Reyes

**ABSTENTION**

Hon. Ms M D Hassan Nahon

3390 **Mr Speaker:** Ten Members have voted in favour of the Second Reading of the Bill, 6 have recorded a no and there is 1 abstention; so the Second Reading of the Bill can be done, and it has been done by Government majority.

**Clerk:** The Supplementary Appropriation (2018/2019) Act 2020.

**Supplementary Appropriation (2018/2019) Bill 2020 –  
Committee Stage and Third Reading to be taken at this sitting**

**Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo):** Mr Speaker, I beg to give notice that the Committee Stage and Third Reading of the Bill be taken today, if all hon. Members agree.

3395

**Mr Speaker:** Do all hon. Members agree that the Committee Stage and Third Reading of the Bill be taken today?

**Members:** Aye.

*In Committee of the whole House*

**Supplementary Appropriation (2016/2017) Bill 2020 –  
Clauses considered and approved**

**Clerk:** Committee Stage and Third Reading.  
The Hon. the Chief Minister.

3400

**Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo):** Mr Speaker, I have the honour to move that the House should resolve itself into Committee to consider the following Bills clause by clause: the Supplementary Appropriation (2016/2017) Bill 2019; the Supplementary Appropriation (2017/2018) Bill 2019; and the Supplementary Appropriation (2018/2019) Bill 2020; as well as the Appropriation Bill 2021.

3405

**Clerk:** A Bill for an Act to appropriate the sums of money to the service in the year ended the 31st day of March 2017. Clause 1.

3410

**Hon. Chief Minister:** Mr Speaker, I have got to move, as I will in respect of each of these first three Bills, that the Bill be renamed 2021 when it becomes an Act.

**Mr Chairman:** Clause 1, as amended, stand part of the Bill.

3415

**Clerk:** Clauses 2 to 5.

**Mr Chairman:** Clauses 2 to 5 stand part of the Bill.

**Clerk:** The Schedule.

3420

**Mr Chairman:** The Schedule stands part of the Bill.

**Clerk:** The long title.

**Mr Chairman:** The long title stands part of the Bill.

**Supplementary Appropriation (2017/2018) Bill 2020 –  
Clauses considered and approved**

3425 **Clerk:** A Bill for an Act to appropriate sums of money to the service of the year ended 31st day of March 2018. Clause 1.

**Mr Chairman:** A small amendment is required.  
Chief Minister.

3430

**Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo):** Mr Speaker, the same amendment that was proposed in respect of the date to 2021.

**Mr Chairman:** Clause 1, as amended, stands part of the Bill.

3435

**Clerk:** Clauses 2 to 5.

**Mr Chairman:** Clauses 2 to 5 stand part of the Bill.

3440

**Clerk:** The Schedule.

**Mr Chairman:** The Schedule stands part of the Bill.

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**Clerk:** Long title.

**Mr Chairman:** The long title stands part of the Bill.

**Supplementary Appropriation (2018/2019) Bill 2020 –  
Clauses considered and approved**

**Clerk:** A Bill for an Act to appropriate sums of money to the service of the year ended 31st day of March 2019.

3450 **Mr Chairman:** Clause 1, which has an amendment for the year 2020 to 2021, stands part of the Bill.

**Clerk:** Clauses 2 to 6.

3455

**Mr Chairman:** Clauses 2 to 6 stand part of the Bill.

**Clerk:** The Schedule.

**Mr Chairman:** The Schedule stands part of the Bill.

3460

**Clerk:** The long title.

**Mr Chairman:** The long title stands part of the Bill.

**Appropriation (2021/2022) Bill 2020 –  
Clauses considered and approved**

3465 **Clerk:** A Bill for an Act to appropriate sums of money to the service of the year ending 31st day of March 2022. Clause 1.

**Mr Chairman:** Clause 1 stands part of the Bill.  
We have a minor technical issue ... (*Interjection*)  
We said clause 1 stands part of the Bill.

3470

**Clerk:** Clause 2, head 1, Treasury, subheads 1 to 3.

**Mr Chairman:** Head 1, Treasury, subheads 1 to 3 stands part of the Bill.

3475

**Clerk:** Head 2, No. 6 Convent Place, subheads 1 to 3.

**Mr Chairman:** Head 2, No. 6 Convent Place, subheads 1 to 3 stand part of the Bill.

**Clerk:** Head 3, Office of the Chief Technical Officer, subheads 1 to 3.

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**Mr Chairman:** Head 3, Office of the Chief Technical Officer, subheads 1 to 3 stand part of the Bill.

**Clerk:** Head 4, Customs, subheads 1 to 3.

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**Mr Chairman:** Head 4, Customs, subheads 1 to 3 stand part of the Bill.

3490 **Hon. K Azopardi:** Sorry, can I just ask for clarification (**Mr Chairman:** Of course) on that head on Customs? There are nine customs officers there and supernumerary staff, can I just get a bit of clarification on why that is compared to the previous year where there are none?

**Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo):** Mr Speaker, this is the overlap between retirement and training. That is the reason.

3495 **Hon. K Azopardi:** I am not sure I follow, if it is the overlap between retirement and training. There is a total increase of staff of nine, and I am really asking why that is.

3500 **Hon. Chief Minister:** In the context of how we run the Training School for Customs, when you become enrolled in the Training School for Customs you are considered to be a customs officer. The reason that there are nine people being trained now, and the number for training is nine, is because they cannot train I think less than eight or nine at any particular time. It does not make sense to run the school for less than that. That is the number of anticipated retirements coming up during the course of the year, that is why it is being run like that.

3505 **Mr Chairman:** Head 4, Customs, subheads 1 to 3 stand part of the Bill.

**Hon. K Azopardi:** Can I also on that one ask on head 4(2) under Rents and Service Charges. (*Interjection*) Yes, 6. The reason ... oh, I see now. That is fine.

3510 **Clerk:** Head 5, Income Tax, subheads 1 to 3.

**Mr Chairman:** Head 5, Income Tax, subheads 1 to 3 stand part of the Bill.

**Clerk:** Head 6, Parliament, subheads 1 to 3.

3515 **Mr Chairman:** Head 6, Parliament, subheads 1 to 3 stand part of the Bill.

**Clerk:** Head 7, Human Resources, subheads 1 to 3.

3520 **Mr Chairman:** Head 7, Human Resources, subheads 1 to 3 stand part of –

**Hon. K Azopardi:** Yes, I was just going to ask there –

**Mr Chairman:** I will rectify that.

3525 **Hon. K Azopardi:** Sorry, I was going to ask there on Establishment for clarification on the AAs. There are 25 posts there. Can I get some information on that?

3530 **Hon. Chief Minister:** Yes, Mr Speaker. This is the place where the AAs who were recruited are held in the Book to be deployed around the service where necessary, and that is where the hon. Gentleman will see them. This year at least, Mr Speaker, they may then eventually make their ways into other parts of the Book.

**Mr Chairman:** Head 7, Human Resources, subheads 1 to 3 stand part of the Bill.

3535 **Clerk:** Head 8, Immigration and Civil Status, subheads 1 to 3.

**Mr Chairman:** Head 8, Immigration and Civil Status, subheads 1 to 3 stand part of the Bill.

**Clerk:** Head 9, Financial Secretary's Office, subheads 1 to 3.

3540 **Mr Chairman:** Head 9, Financial Secretary's Office, subheads 1 to 3 stand part of the Bill.

**Clerk:** Head 10, Government Law Offices, subheads 1 to 3.

3545 **Mr Chairman:** Head 10, Government Law Offices, subheads 1 to 3 stand part of the Bill.

**Clerk:** Head 11, Public Service Support Unit, subheads 1 and 2.

3550 **Mr Chairman:** Head 11, Public Service Support Unit, subheads 1 and 2 stand part of the Bill.

**Clerk:** Head 12, Office of the Deputy Chief Minister, subheads 1 to 3.

3555 **Hon. K Azopardi:** Sorry, on 2, subhead 19, the Algeciras Ferry, there is a significant increase there. Perhaps the Government can provide us some information on why they think those costs will be much more significant this year?

3560 **Deputy Chief Minister (Hon. Dr J J Garcia):** Mr Speaker, the costs incurred under this subhead have now terminated, or will terminate, because there is no longer any support for the ferry, and the figure does not include the contribution made by the United Kingdom, nor does it include the costs paid by the actual users of the ferry. So that figure will actually be considerably less.

**Mr Chairman:** Head 12, Office of the –

3565 **Hon. D Bossino:** Mr Chairman, may I also ask the Deputy Chief Minister why the increase under head 12(8) which is entitled, or described as a UK Parliamentary Consultancy – so from the actual figure of 2018-19 it goes from £60,000, to the estimated expenditure under that head which is £113,000.

3570 **Deputy Chief Minister:** Mr Speaker, this relates to an increase in costs and salaries. Salaries. An increase in costs and salaries.

**Mr Chairman:** Head 12, Office of the Deputy Chief Minister, subheads 1 to 3 stand part of the Bill.

3575 **Clerk:** Head 13, Civil Aviation, subheads 1 to 3.

**Mr Chairman:** Head 13, Civil Aviation, subheads 1 to 3 stand part of the Bill.

**Clerk:** Head 14, Environment, subheads 1 to 3.

3580 **Mr Chairman:** Head 14, Environment, subheads 1 to 3 stand part of the Bill.

**Clerk:** Head 15, Collection and Disposal of Refuse, subheads 1 to 3.

3585 **Mr Chairman:** Head 15, Collection and Disposal of Refuse, subheads 1 to 3 stand part of the Bill.

**Clerk:** Head 16, Upper Rock Tourist Sites and Beaches, subheads 1 to 3.

3590 **Hon. D Bossino:** Mr Chairman, may I ask why the significant increase in head 16(iv) which is on the GDC staff, clauses from 17 to 26? (*Interjection*) So, head 16(iv). So you have Gibraltar Development Corporation staff, Establishment, first page.

**Minister for the Environment, Sustainability, Climate Change and Education (Hon. Prof. J E Cortes):** Page ...? (**A Member:** Page 58.) Page 58. (**A Member:** Yes.)

3595 Yes, Mr Chairman, I believe this is because they used to appear under the Tourist Board, and now they come under the Upper Rock and Beaches which is part of the Environment.

There have been GDC staff who are now identified under this head.

3600 **Hon. D Bossino:** Hence the significant increase in the actual figure for 2018-19 to the estimated figure under head 16(2)(10), which is contribution to GDC staff services. Is that the reason why?

**Hon. Prof. J E Cortes:** Clearly they have to be paid. (*Interjection*) It is a move from where they were, it is not additional staff.

3605 **Hon. D Bossino:** May I ask the Minister to go to head 16(2)(15) which is described as 'Sites and Management Systems'. There was no provision for that in 2018-19 or in 2019-21. And then it shoots up, the estimated figure, to £550,000. Can I ask what that is?

3610 **Hon. Prof. J E Cortes:** Yes, this is in relation to the new ticketing system for the Upper Rock section of the Nature Reserve.

**Hon. K Azopardi:** Can the Minister perhaps give us a bit more information as to why the projected expenditure is £550,000 and in the two-year period we have just had it is £615,000? I appreciate it is a new system, but is that a contractual expenditure?

3615 **Hon. Prof. J E Cortes:** This is a new system which did not exist in the previous period, and then there are contractual arrangements which will come into play, and have come into play over the last period that we have been considering here. It did not exist before. *(Interjection)*

3620 Yes, indeed, Mr Chairman, this produces additional revenue and, without going into all the details, it gives us the ability to track all visitors in real time and so on. I could explain further but for these purposes it is a new arrangement which did not exist in the period before this two-year financial year, so it is new.

**Hon. D Bossino:** Is it as a result of the contractual arrangements with Wright Tech Ltd which I think was the subject of the Question and Answer session in the last meeting?

3625 **Hon. Prof. J E Cortes:** Indeed, that is part of that, we have already referred to in that Question and Answer session.

3630 **Hon. D Bossino:** Is there any connection with the reduction in security services, which is further up? If I can assist the Minister, it is under 12 and it goes down from ... I mean, the increase is not that significant but it is an increase in any event.

**Hon. K Azopardi:** It is a reduction.

3635 **Hon. D Bossino:** Is it? No, £165,000 goes up to £210,000.

**Hon. Prof. J E Cortes:** It really is not an increase if you consider the previous figure is for two years, and this is virtually identical. For one year, it is half of what was the case over two years. No significant difference there.

3640 **Mr Chairman:** Head 16, Upper Rock Tourist Sites and Beaches, subheads 1 to 3 stand part of the Bill.

**Clerk:** Head 17, Education, subheads 1 to 3.

3645 **Hon. E J Reyes:** Mr Chairman, the subhead 2(7) under the very general title of 'Gibraltar College', there is £40,000. What exactly is the £40,000 for?

3650 **Hon. Prof. J E Cortes:** These are general expenses, particularly in relation to the Gibraltar College, and there has been again no significant change from in fact the actual expenditure in 2018-19 which was £37,788 and it is £40,000 here.

3655 **Hon. E J Reyes:** Yes, but when the Minister says general expenses in respect of what is it, the equivalent of what in 2, for example, (21), where schools have electricity and water. Is this a separate provision so that the College is not included there? Is that what it is?

**Hon. Prof. J E Cortes:** The College has different expenses in the sense that there are training courses and fees to be paid, and so on. There is a wide range of expenses in relation to the Gibraltar College which have always been put in the Book separately.

3660 **Hon. E J Reyes:** Yes. The only thing is looking, because there are subheads for training, if it is  
for a two-hour training and development course? If it is for staff, the teacher-training expenses,  
or before that the Community Teacher's Centre. But perhaps for future reference we might have  
a subdivision or whatever, because Gibraltar College is a very general title which no other school  
3665 seems to enjoy the privilege of being allocated some more money that you can dip anything into  
there.

**Hon. Prof. J E Cortes:** I do not have a comment on that, it is just this is the way it has been  
done. I think it shows the belief we have in the Gibraltar College. It is a different kind of institution,  
it is run differently. I do not think I would like to subdivide every single school, and I make no  
3670 apology for it. But I do not think it is anything that would certainly, particularly worry me.

**Hon. E J Reyes:** And also, Mr Chairman, on subhead 2(38), Hot Lunches for School. I see that in  
2019-21 there was a total expenditure of £270,000. Has the Minister got any further information  
on how that expenditure was actually incurred?

3675 **Hon. Prof. J E Cortes:** Yes, Mr Chairman, I think the hon. Member will recall that during the  
first term the decision was taken that there would be no charge for the food in order to introduce  
the system, and that is largely what that takes account of. There is no specific provision now, as  
he may also be aware of – or he will be aware – the firm that did it went into administration. We  
3680 are now in the process of identifying new potential suppliers, but we are not in a position yet to  
identify the costs. Which in any case would be minimal to the Government because in future it  
would be the families paying for the food unlike what was happening in the first term when this  
was introduced.

3685 **Hon. E J Reyes:** And, I do not know, Mr Chairman, does the Minister happen to have by chance  
the figures of how many children actually benefited from those lunches?

**Hon. Prof. J E Cortes:** Not here. I would be very happy to either answer a formal question or to  
let the hon. Member know behind the Speaker's Chair. I do not have that information here.

3690 **Hon. K Azopardi:** Mr Chairman, can I ask on Establishment if we could take a page back, as it  
were, on the increase in industrial staff from 174 to 273. That is an increase of 100 posts. Can the  
Minister give us some information on the reason for that?

3695 **Hon. Prof. J E Cortes:** Yes, that is in relation to the fact that we now have much larger schools  
with much more surface area, and the bulk of those is taken up in a larger number of cleaners to  
keep it up to the standards that we require.

**Hon. K Azopardi:** So the increase in 100 is essentially cleaners, is it?

3700 **Hon. Prof. J E Cortes:** Yes, Mr Chairman. It is essentially cleaners.

**Hon. R M Clinton:** Sorry, Mr Chairman, under subhead 40 on Contractors' Services, there is a  
line that appears for 2021-22 of £450,000 for facilities management. I would be grateful if the  
3705 Minister could advise what that is in respect of?

**Hon. Prof. J E Cortes:** Yes, Mr Chairman, clearly when you have large schools which are quite  
sophisticated in their equipment and their furnishings, and so on, you need a maintenance  
agreement and this is in relation to a facilities management agreement that we are discussing the  
3710 detail of, in order to ensure that the schools are properly maintained.

**Hon. R M Clinton:** Sorry, Mr Chairman, if I can just clarify with the Minister. Is he talking about equipment or is he talking about the fabric of the building?

3715 **Hon. Prof. J E Cortes:** I am talking about a facilities management agreement in order to ensure that the equipment is fine, the lifts are fine, the air conditioning works. It is a whole gambit of requirements. So essentially it is both: equipment, premises and utilities in the sense of lifts, air conditioning and so on.

3720 **Hon. D Bossino:** But is that for all the schools, or is it just for the comprehensives?

**Hon. Prof. J E Cortes:** This is mainly for the two comprehensives, which are the most sophisticated by way of equipment and so on.

3725 But just to add, you cannot build these schools and then forget about them for the next 10 years, so we really have to have a proactive management system and this is what this is going to ensure.

3730 **Hon. K Azopardi:** Sorry, can I just ask, pulling the thread from what the Hon. Minister explained before that they have got 100 more industrial staff as a result of the new schools and so on. So if the Minister goes to head 17, subhead (2) Industrial Wages and on Basic Wages, and accounting for the fact that we have had a two-year period for the last Budget, it still suggests that there was more money paid in terms of basic wages, as industrial wages, at a time when the establishment was much lower with industrials. Can he clarify that?

3735 **Hon. Prof. J E Cortes:** Yes, in fact for that period of time there were cleaners, but they were on a supply basis and therefore they would not be reflected in the complement. They were cleaning but they were employed as supply cleaners.

3740 **Hon. K Azopardi:** I think the Hon. Minister has misunderstood the question. I think I am really saying the opposite. There appears to have been money paid by way of industrial wages *higher* than the projection for this year, that is what I am saying, when in this year there are 100 posts more. So I am saying how is it that the basic wages would have been higher at a time when there is 100 less posts?

3745 **Hon. Prof. J E Cortes:** Mr Chairman, you can add another £300,000, if you go down to Temporary Assistance, which will cover the additional supplies and you have got to pool them together in order to understand that.

So to the industrial wages, you would have to add another £300,000, and that brings it much closer to what happened the year before.

3750 **Mr R M Clinton:** Sorry, Mr Chairman, I just have one question, coming back to facilities management. In Establishment the Walthay Director of Estates, one person in 2019-20, and in 2021-22 that position appears to have disappeared. Is this in any way related to the Facilities Management Contract? Or why is it that the position of Director of Estates is no longer to be filled?

3755 **Hon. Prof. J E Cortes:** It is indirectly related. Stretching it a bit, that individual retired and has not been replaced; and at the same time we are developing this facilities management arrangement which in a way will cover some of that. But it is only very far stretched, and I would not link them directly.

3760 **Hon. K Azopardi:** Can I ask on head 2, subhead 16 Scholarships and on Discretionary Awards. There is a projection there of £600,000 and in the two-year period previously £2.7 million, so

making a loose calculation it suggests a 50% reduction. Is that the situation that the Government are projecting a reduction on discretionary to that extent?

3765 **Hon. Prof. J E Cortes:** We have already made a public statement on this. We will allow all existing students who are successful in getting accepted for future years, but clearly the budget for discretionary has been reduced. We have made no secret of this and that is reflected in the Book.

3770 **Hon. Chief Minister:** But, Mr Speaker, reduced from the highest numbers we have ever seen before. (**A Member:** Yes, I know.) So, if the hon. Gentleman looks at £959,000 in 2018-19, that was the highest number ever paid before in the context of discretionary, and it has got the two rolled-up years, Mr Speaker, there. And this year we are aiming for £600,000 which was, I think, closer to what we paid in 2017-18, so all we are doing is going back to them with an overall figure  
3775 for scholarships of £16.6 million, which is still where we were in 2018-19.

**Mr Chairman:** Head 17, Education, subheads 1 to 3 stand part of the Bill.

**Clerk:** Head 18, Gibraltar University, subheads 1 and 2.

3780

**Mr Chairman:** Head 18, Gibraltar University, subheads 1 and 2 stand part of the Bill.

**Clerk:** Head 19, Heritage, subheads 1 to 3.

3785

**Mr Chairman:** Head 19, Heritage, subheads 1 to 3 stand part of the Bill.

**Clerk:** Head 20, Culture, subheads 1 to 3.

**Mr Chairman:** Head 20, Culture, subheads 1 to 3 stand part of the Bill.

3790

**Clerk:** Head 21, Driver and Vehicle Licensing, subheads 1 to 3.

**Hon. R M Clinton:** Sorry, Mr Chairman, just one line item under subhead 2(12) Postage Expenses, projected £50,000. The outturn for two years was £35,000, and given that we are  
3795 moving to e-Government-type services I am just curious as to why, given that in 2018-19 they spent about £3,000 and they are now projected for £50,000?

**Minister for Minister for Transport (Hon. P J Balban):** Mr Speaker, I have not been able to hear the hon. Gentleman very well, I have got a problem with my ears, but I think he has asked about  
3800 why postage expenses have remained up regardless of whether we are carrying out e-Government services. I think that has been due to COVID with counter services and collections, work has changed to postal services by registered mail. That is what I have got here.

It is that a lot more things are being sent by post to avoid people coming to the counter because of COVID restrictions. So, instead of asking people to come and collect their items, the items have  
3805 been sent to them, and that is why the cost of postage is as such.

**Hon. E J Phillips:** Mr Chairman, just in relation to head 21(2)(17), the incentive scheme for importation of hybrid vehicles. Whilst obviously we understand that escalated during the principal COVID period from 2019 to 2021, for reasons that have been articulated before this House, can  
3810 the Minister just explain in a bit more detail as to what that actual cost is? It just describes it generically as an 'incentive scheme importation of hybrid vehicles'. Is there any more detail about that?

**Hon. P J Balban:** This was an incentive scheme the Government had in terms of cashback for people who purchased a hybrid vehicle. *(Interjection)*

3815

**Mr Chairman:** Head 21, Driver and Vehicle Licensing, subheads 1 to 3 stand part of the Bill.

**Clerk:** Head 22, Technical Services, subheads 1 to 3.

3820

**Mr Chairman:** Head 22, Technical Services, subheads 1 to 3 stand part of the Bill.

**Clerk:** Head 23, Social Security, subheads 1 to 3.

3825

**Mr Chairman:** Head 23, Social Security, subheads 1 to 3 stand part of the Bill.

**Clerk:** Head 24, Economic Development, subheads 1 to 3.

**Mr Chairman:** Head 24, Economic Development, subheads 1 to 3 stand part of the Bill.

3830

**Clerk:** Head 25, Statistics Office, subheads 1 to 3.

**Mr Chairman:** Head 25, Statistics Office, subheads 1 to 3 stand part of the Bill.

**Clerk:** Head 26, Procurement Office, subheads 1 to 3.

3835

**Mr Chairman:** Head 26, Procurement Office, subheads 1 to 3 stand part of the Bill.

**Clerk:** Head 27, Health, subheads 1 to 3.

3840

**Hon. E J Phillips:** Yes, Mr Speaker, in relation to Health, the Establishment at page 214 of the Book, there was reference made in speeches and indeed in reply from the Chief Minister in relation to the consultant clinical psychologist. That does not appear to feature ... It features specifically within the book at page 214, but I understand that there is no provision to replace the consultant clinical psychologist, which is a particularly key role, as I understand it.

3845

I understand also that the associate psychologists would require supervision of the consultant clinical psychologist from a regulatory perspective, so I was just wondering why that has zeroed out in the full-time position for 2021-22. Is it the intention of Government *not* to provide for that position moving forward?

3850

**Mr Chairman:** If I could intervene just for a moment, we have not got to that page yet.

Let's continue and stick to head 27, Health, and then perhaps we can discuss, you can raise the matter when we – *(Interjections)*

Head 27, Health, subheads 1 to 3 stand part of the Bill.

3855

**Clerk:** Head 28, Gibraltar Health Authority – Elderly Residential Services section, subheads 1 and 2.

**Mr Chairman:** Head 28, Gibraltar Health Authority – Elderly Residential Services section, subheads 1 and 2 stand part of the Bill.

3860

**Clerk:** Head 29, Care Agency, subheads 1 and 2.

**Mr Chairman:** Head 29, Care Agency, subheads 1 and 2 stand part of the Bill.

**Clerk:** Head 30, Equality, subheads 1 to 3.

3865

**Mr Chairman:** Head 30, Equality, subheads 1 to 3 stand part of the Bill.

**Clerk:** Head 31, Policing, subheads 1 to 3.

3870

**Hon. K Azopardi:** So maybe just on subhead 1, on the Emergency Provision. Perhaps some clarification there, because it has gone from a fairly small actual expenditure in 2018-19 of £18,000; £67,000 over two years to £300,000. So just some clarification as to what it is intended to provide for and then what is expected?

3875

**Hon. Chief Minister:** Mr Speaker, here it is about hon. Members seeing the discretionary overtime in that period, as compared to the emergency booked, which was £18,000. Yes? What we are saying is it should be booked as emergency because when, particularly with the Police, the way that they explain what is done in the context of this overtime, is what we think is emergency overtime. In other words it is demand-led overtime. It is required. It is not something that you *choose* to do.

3880

The *choose* to do is what we think is at zero, and should be done in the context of the resources available. The *need* to do, we are saying should be provided for under *emergency* overtime. That is everything that is demand-led, everything which is investigation, etc., etc. So it is there, we are just shifting between the columns to move it toward what we think is a more appropriate explanation for that sort of overtime.

3885

**Hon. K Azopardi:** Okay, I am grateful for that explanation.

In that case, then, and given that the expenditure was £1.3 million last year and over £568,000 for 2018-19. Is that perhaps an under-provision?

3890

**Hon. Chief Minister:** We do not think it is, Mr Speaker, in the way that we have provided for it, we do not think it is. But traditionally what you want to do in the context of these heads, the hon. Gentleman may remember, is not provide so much that it might become a field that people plough with gusto. So if there is a need for more, Mr Speaker, especially in this head, then of course it will be provided and we will come back to this House and seek supplementary.

3895

**Mr Chairman:** Head 31, Policing, subheads 1 to 3 stand part of the Bill.

**Clerk:** Head 32, Gibraltar Law Courts, subheads 1 to 3.

3900

**Mr Chairman:** Head 32, Gibraltar Law Courts, subheads 1 to 3 stand part of the Bill.

**Clerk:** Head 33, Justice, subheads 1 to 3.

3905

**Hon. K Azopardi:** Mr Chairman, yes, on subhead 10 of 2, National Security, Centralised Intelligence System, that £816,000, that comes from another head of expenditure in the previous Budget? Is that correct?

3910

**Minister for the Health Authority, Justice, Multiculturalism, Equality and Community Affairs (Hon. Miss S J Sacramento):** Yes, Mr Chairman, that is the case.

**Hon. K Azopardi:** The Minister can clarify that £816,000 is a contractual fee. Is that right?

3915

**Hon. Chief Minister:** Mr Speaker, I would not use the word 'contractual' to describe that. I would say it is a figure that we paid under the arrangement that we have with the provider of

the NCIS system, with whom we have a dispute as to the contract. So I would not use the word 'contractual', I would not think it is appropriate.

3920

**Mr Chairman:** Head 33, Justice, subheads 1 to 3 stand part of the Bill.

**Clerk:** Head 34, Prison, subheads 1 to 3.

3925

**Hon. K Azopardi:** On that, can I ask on Establishment, on Prison, there are 13 more prison officers, and the reason for that?

**Hon. Miss S J Sacramento:** Mr Chairman, this arises out of negotiations that go back a couple of years ago, and the complement was increased a couple of years ago. This now means that there would be more prison officers on duty at different shifts.

3930

**Hon. K Azopardi:** So the complement would have increased. Are they actually in post now?

**Hon. Chief Minister:** Yes, Mr Speaker, because there are no vacancies in the Book.

3935

**Mr Chairman:** Head 34, Prison, subheads 1 to 3 stand part of the Bill.

**Clerk:** Head 35, Drug and Alcohol Awareness and Rehabilitation Services, subheads 1 to 3.

3940

**Hon. E J Phillips:** Mr Chairman, just in relation to one payroll, salaries are reflected at £96,000 for the estimate for this year. Could the Minister explain in that context other charges 21 and 23 where the secondment and the relief cover respectively for the estimated years, £360,000 and £237,000 respectively? Could the Minister explain what that is about, insofar as the salary being at £96,000 for the three individuals that are currently in the establishment?

3945

**Hon. Miss S J Sacramento:** Mr Chairman, these are the costs for Bruce's Farm, and they appear here. But in terms of substantive staff of Bruce's Farm, they would have Care Agency contracts. So because they appear under this chapter they will appear as seconded to this Ministry; and the relief cover relates to those who do not.

3950

**Hon. K Azopardi:** Is the Minister saying it is not new people because of this change in numbers, really. All we are asking for is to understand why it jumps from, in effect, £100,000 to £237,000?

3955

**Hon. Miss S J Sacramento:** Mr Chairman, this represents a change in the presentation of the figures, but there has not been an increase. It is exactly the same, it is just a different structure in the way it is presented.

3960

**Hon. K Azopardi:** If the Minister can clarify, because I think on this side we are just not understanding the change in presentation, because we are comparing the same item in respect of previous years, and we are just not understanding how it is a change in presentation points. Perhaps she can explain.

3965

**Hon. Miss S J Sacramento:** Mr Chairman, this is because this is the predicted forecast outturn, and if we look at the one figure, it is in relation to two years, but we predict in relation to this year, obviously, for it to be only one year, and therefore that is why it is less. But the structure – *(Interjection)* no, it is less. *(Interjection)* Secondment is less.

Mr Speaker, the structure, the numbers, the complement remains the same. There has not been an increase in relation to the number of staff at Bruce's Farm. *(Interjection)*

**Hon. K Azopardi:** Yes, I mean, the Minister has said that ... It is just that we are seeing the relief cover figure is in effect the same as a two-year figure in the other column, so it is double what would have been paid in 2018-19. We are trying to understand that.

3970

**Hon. Miss S J Sacramento:** Mr Chairman, the figure for relief cover increases because at the moment there are more vacancies of substantive posts. So this is essentially an adjustment because the payment for these will come out of the relief cover vote.

3975

**Mr Chairman:** Head 35, Drug and Alcohol Awareness and Rehabilitation Services, subheads 1 to 3 stand part of the Bill.

**Clerk:** Head 36, Civil Contingency, subheads 1 to 3.

3980

**Mr Chairman:** Head 36, Civil Contingency, subheads 1 to 3 stand part of the Bill.

**Clerk:** Head 37, Fire and Rescue Service, subheads 1 to 3.

**Mr Chairman:** Head 37, Fire and Rescue Service, subheads 1 to 3 stand part of the Bill.

3985

**Clerk:** Head 38, Airport Fire and Rescue Service, subheads 1 and 2.

**Mr Chairman:** Head 38, Airport Fire and Rescue Service, subheads 1 and 2 stand part of the Bill.

3990

**Clerk:** Head 39 Housing, subheads 1 to 3.

**Mr Chairman:** Head 39, Housing, subheads 1 to 3 stand part of the Bill.

3995

**Clerk:** Head 40, Employment, subheads 1 to 3.

**Mr Chairman:** Head 40, Employment, subheads 1 to 3 stand part of the Bill.

**Clerk:** Head 41, Youth, subheads 1 to 3.

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**Mr Chairman:** Head 41, Youth, subheads 1 to 3 stand part of the Bill.

**Clerk:** Head 42, Sport and Leisure, subheads 1 to 3.

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**Mr Chairman:** Head 42, Sport and Leisure, subheads 1 to 3 stand part of the Bill.

**Clerk:** Head 43, Financial Services, subheads 1 to 3.

**Mr Chairman:** Head 43, Financial Services, subheads 1 to 3 stand part of the Bill

4010

**Clerk:** Head 44, Gambling Division, subheads 1 to 3.

4015

**Hon. D Bossino:** Mr Chairman, can I ask the Hon. Minister, again, it is very similar to the point I raised in relation to the Upper Rock, I think it was, there is an increase in GDC staff from five to nine. Is that as a result of a reorganisation as well? It is in head 44(iv).

**Minister for Digital, Financial Services and Public Utilities (Hon. A J Isola):** Sorry, could the hon. Member refer to what the question is? An increase the staff from 10 to 12?

4020 **Hon. K Azopardi:** No it is the section just above that, so it is from the GDC staff, and it is a considerable increase from five to nine.

4025 **Hon. A J Isola:** I think this must be a restructure. We have not increased the number of staff. There was an increase around 18 months ago, with a new regulator where we took on the regulation of machines within the retail outlets around Gibraltar. I am not aware of any increase that than that, but I can check and come back. *(Interjection from the Hon. Chief Minister)*

Oh, I see, yes. So the one I am referring to would be one of the two because there has been a switch in the establishment, with an extra GDC and one less from the public service.

But I can happily check and come back to the hon. Member.

4030 **Mr Chairman:** Head 44, Gambling Division, subheads 1 to 3 stand part of the Bill.

**Clerk:** Head 45, Digital Services, subheads 1 to 3.

4035 **Hon. K Azopardi:** I was just going to ask the Minister for, again, clarification on the payroll salaries of £684,000 where it is zero for previous years. Is that expenditure that was somewhere else in the Book before and it does not involve new posts? Or is it new posts and, if so, how many new posts are we talking about?

4040 **Hon. A J Isola:** No, this was previously the Ministry linked with ITLD, which now have their own head, a little bit later on. This is now, in fact, the Ministry Office so the people who work to me are within this head. They were previously there before, obviously, there is no change, it is the same number of people. But the heads have changed and they have come from somewhere else. These are not new people, but ...

4045 **Hon. Chief Minister:** This is the Ministry.

**Hon. A J Isola:** Yes, this is the Ministry Office.

4050 It is a restructure involving a number of different Ministries because two years ago I think it came under the Ministry of Commerce. Then it was divided and Minister Daryanani took over parts of Commerce, so some of the people that have gone and others that have come in are from the restructuring of the different businesses. There are different Ministries, there is also Town Planning, which was with Mr Balban previously. It is a complete restructure which I am happy to share with him.

4055 **Mr Chairman:** Head 45, Digital Services, subheads 1 to 3 stand part of the Bill.

**Clerk:** Head 46, Information Technology and Logistics Department, subheads 1 to 3.

4060 **Hon. K Azopardi:** And there again, the same point I was going to ask, just for confirmation for the record. There are not new posts in the £1.4 million – on salaries?

**Hon. A J Isola:** These are all exactly the same people restructured from the Ministerial restructuring that we have done.

4065 **Mr Chairman:** Head 46, Information Technology and Logistics Department, subheads 1 to 3 stand part of the Bill.

**Clerk:** Head 47, Utilities, subheads 1 and 2.

4070 **Mr Chairman:** Head 47, Utilities, subheads 1 and 2 stand part of Bill.

**Clerk:** Head 48, Town Planning and Building Control, subheads 1 to 3.

**Hon. D Bossino:** Could I ask the Minister, what are the charges? There is an entry there which says 'Other charges'. So what is it referring to? It is at the very end. *(Interjections)*

4075 The figures are pretty much consistent it seems, although it seems to go up in the bunched-up financial years.

Oh, I see. No, it does not quite add up. *(Interjections)*

**Mr Chairman:** You are on Town Planning at the moment ... *(Interjections)*

4080

**Hon. D Bossino:** Sorry, if I may, by way of clarification, at the very end there is a line which says 'Other Charges'. Is that meant to correlate with 2, on the page opposite? And if it is meant to, the numbers do not quite match. *(Interjections)*

Town Planning and Building Control, page 142 ...

4085

**Mr Chairman:** The carry-forward is 434 and the 1,000 additional makes it up to 435. *(Interjections)*

Head 48, Town Planning and Building Control, subheads 1 to 3 stand part of the Bill.

4090

**Clerk:** Head 49, Broadcasting, subheads 1 and 2.

**Hon. K Azopardi:** I thought there, perhaps clarification of the contribution to GBC, which is obviously going up, just to understand the extra half a million?

4095

**Hon. A J Isola:** Is the hon. Member looking for a breakdown of the £5.2?

**Hon. K Azopardi:** I think we are trying to understand the increase in roughly £500,000, from what was the expenditure in 2018-19, which would have been replicated in previous years.

4100

**Hon. A J Isola:** From what I am seeing on the rather long list of a very large number of different payments, it seems to be just a general increase ... I mean, this payroll is up, other charges are up, licensing costs are up, and I think the combination of those is the difference between the £4.7 of 2018-19 to the £5.2 of today.

4105

**Mr Chairman:** Head 49, Broadcasting, subheads 1 and 2 stand part of the Bill.

**Clerk:** Head 50, Gibraltar Regulatory Authority, subheads 1 and 2.

4110 **Hon. K Azopardi:** On subhead 2 there, the contribution to the GRA, again that has gone up a good £500,000 on a single year. Perhaps some clarification on that?

**Hon. A J Isola:** Thank you, Mr Chairman.

The number has been kept to the same amount as it was last year's, it is exactly half of what was there previously. The last two years have been at that rate.

4115

**Mr Chairman:** Head 50, Gibraltar Regulatory Authority, subheads 1 and 2 stand part of the Bill.

**Clerk:** Head 51, Tourism, subheads 1 to 3.

4120

**Hon. D Bossino:** Mr Chairman, can I ask the Minister how provision for this year was going to be accounted for? It does not seem to be set out here. I am not sure how that is going to work.

**Minister for Business, Tourism and The Port (Hon. V Daryanani):** Well, Mr Chairman, it is something, as I said in my Budget speech, we will be taking our time to take this decision. So at the moment because, as I said, we have not discussed exact remuneration or anything of that sort.

4125

**Hon. D Bossino:** So, as things stand, it is not currently provided for in the Budget Book. Is that correct? Is my understanding correct?

**Hon. V Daryanani:** No, it is not. As I have said, we do not know the remuneration so we cannot really provide for anything if we are not aware of it yet.

4130

So the answer to your question is that it is not provided for.

**Mr Chairman:** Head 51, Tourism, subheads 1 to 3 stand part of the Bill.

4135

**Clerk:** Head 52, Business, subheads 1 to 3.

**Mr Chairman:** Head 52, Business, subheads 1 to 3 stand part of the Bill.

**Clerk:** Head 53, Postal Services, subheads 1 to 3.

4140

**Mr Chairman:** Head 53, Postal Services, subheads 1 to 3 stand part of the Bill.

**Clerk:** Head 54, Office of Fair Trading, subheads 1 to 3.

4145

**Mr Chairman:** Head 54, Office of Fair Trading, subheads 1 to 3 stand part of the Bill.

**Clerk:** Head 55, Port, subheads 1 and 2.

**Mr Chairman:** Head 55, Port, subheads 1 and 2 stand part of the Bill.

4150

**Clerk:** Head 56, Maritime Services, subheads 1 to 3.

**Hon. D Bossino:** Mr Chairman, can I take the Minister to 2(16) which is headed Maritime Accident Investigation Expenses? There seems to be a considerable increase for the estimate for this coming year of £150,000. Can he can explain why that is the case?

4155

**Hon. V Daryanani:** Mr Chairman, this includes £100,000 to accommodate an MOU with the UK Marine Accident Investigation Branch.

4160

**Mr Chairman:** Head 56, Maritime Services, subheads 1 to 3 stand part of the Bill..

**Clerk:** And finally for clause 2: head 57, Gibraltar Audit Office.

**Hon. R M Clinton:** Sorry, Mr Chairman.

4165

Can the Minister advise – or somebody advise, yes, the Chief Minister – why there is a headcount decrease of two projected for the coming year?

**Hon. Chief Minister:** The hon. Gentleman can read that either as a projected headcount reduction of two, or a projected headcount in maintenance of two more than when they were in office. There were 17 and there are now 19 instead of 21, Mr Speaker, because for the reason I have indicated, we are not proposing to provide for vacancies. So he can see where the reduction is, he can see that it is one less auditor and one less assistant auditor that is provided for at the moment.

4170

**Hon. R M Clinton:** Mr Chairman, yes, I can see that. *(Interjection)*

4175

**Hon. Chief Minister:** I would see that one auditor was previously overstated, that is to say the figure was wrong in the previous Budget Book. It is in the footnote there: one auditor previously overstated. So in fact it is a reduction from 20 to 21.

4180

**Mr Chairman:** Head 57, Gibraltar Audit Office, subheads 1 to 3 stand part of the Bill. Clause 2 stands part of the Bill.

**Clerk:** We now move to clause 3.

Head 59, Contributions to Government-Owned Companies, subhead 1.

4185

**Hon. R M Clinton:** Mr Chairman, I know I have asked before, but I do not suppose the Government would be willing to give a breakdown of the companies to which this £30 million would be attributed?

4190

**Hon. Chief Minister:** All of that money goes to Gibraltar investment Holdings Ltd, Mr Speaker.

**Mr Chairman:** Head 59, Contributions to Government-Owned Companies, subhead 1 stands part of the Bill.

4195

**Clerk:** Head 60, Transfer from Government Surplus, subhead 1.

**Mr Chairman:** Head 60, Transfer from Government Surplus, subhead 1 stands part of the Bill.

**Clerk:** Head 61, Contribution to the Improvement and Development Fund, subhead 1.

4200

**Mr Chairman:** Head 61, Contribution to the Improvement and Development Fund, subhead 1 stands part of the Bill.

**Clerk:** Finally, Head 62, Contribution to the COVID-19 Response Fund, subhead 1.

4205

**Mr Chairman:** Head 62, Contribution to the COVID-19 Response Fund, subhead 1 stands part of the Bill.

Clause 3 stands part of the Bill.

4210

**Clerk:** Clause 4, head 58, Supplementary Provision.

**Mr Chairman:** Head 58, Supplementary Provision, (1) Supplementary Funding stands part of the Bill.

Clause 4 stands part of the Bill.

4215

**Clerk:** Clause 5, Improvement and Development Fund. Head 101, Works and Equipment, subhead 1.

4220

**Mr Chairman:** The Improvement and Development Fund, head 101, Works and Equipment, subhead 1 stands part of the Bill.

**Clerk:** Head 102, Projects, subheads 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6. *(Interjections)*

**Hon. E J Phillips:** Mr Chairman, just in relation to subhead 4, 102 (t) –

4225 **Hon. K Azopardi:** My apologies, Mr Chairman, I did have a question on 101, if I may?  
On the contribution to the Housing Works Agency of £4 million, there, can the Minister explain what that item is for?

4230 **Minister for Employment, Housing, Youth & Sport (Hon. S E Linares):** Yes, it is recurring maintenance, refurbishment and everything that we need to do for when houses are given in. The Housing Works Agency deals with that, and therefore what we do is we subcontract to smaller companies who actually do the turnover of the houses.

4235 **Hon. K Azopardi:** If that is the case and we just go across and there is no money provided for in the previous Budget or in 2018-19, is that because that sum was somewhere else in the Budget?

**Hon. S E Linares:** If the hon. Member goes to page 177, it says: Housing works and repairs, the Principal Housing Officer, that the money is there, which is £11 million of two years has now gone to the Housing Works Agency.

4240 So basically what it means is that the controlling officer of the moneys now goes to the Housing Works Agency.

**Mr Chairman:** Head 101 Works and Equipment, subhead 1 stands part of the Bill.

4245 **Hon. R M Clinton:** Mr Chairman, I just have a question on head 102, subhead 5 Equity Funding. I am conscious, Mr Chairman, I have a question on a contribution to the Gibraltar International Bank for 2019-21, but I am just curious as to why there is a provision for an extra £5 million for 2021-22?

4250 **Hon. Chief Minister:** Mr Speaker, as I understand it is because of the growth of deposits in the Bank may require that the capital adequacy ratios be supplemented by an additional payment which we would be ready to provide if necessary.

4255 **Hon. E J Phillips:** Mr Chairman, just in relation to subhead 4, Other Projects (t) The Construction of Central Park, which I assume is the Midtown Park, there is an additional £100,000 for 2021-22, and that is obviously for the year ending 31st March 2022. I was just wondering why this line features on the basis of the disclosure that the Trusted Novus Bank were effectively donating the entire sum to the Government?

It is just the additional £100,000 that is all.

4260 **Hon. Chief Minister:** Mr Speaker, because the Book was done four months ago and the unsolicited donation that I referred him to came after that. So what he is seeing is the running costs of the works and the cost at that time, and there will obviously be a mechanism by which the money comes into the Government General Account.

4265 **Hon. E J Phillips:** Just one further question on head 102, subhead 4(z)(q), Sustainable Traffic, Transport and Parking Plan. I think we were given, understanding questions previously, that there was a one-off amount for the plan to be prepared and I was just wondering whether the Government could give more information as to why it expects to be spending another £500,000 on a *plan*. I just wanted to know how that works.

4275 **Hon. P J Balban:** Mr Chairman, the price of the Plan itself moneys that were paid in previous financial years that was to address the actual document itself. Any other projects relating to the Sustainable Traffic Plan is also referred to as a Sustainable Traffic Plan, and that is where that money goes, to projects coming from that plan, the plan itself.

**Mr Chairman:** Head 102, Projects, subheads 1 to 6 stand part of the Bill.  
Clause 5 stands part of the Bill.

**Clerk:** Clauses 6 and 7, Gibraltar Development Corporation.

4280

**Mr Chairman:** Page 186. Gibraltar Development Corporation stands part of the Bill.

**Clerk:** Borders and Coastguard Agency. That is at page 211.

4285

**Hon. K Azopardi:** Sorry, on the Borders and Coastguard can I ask on the contribution from the Consolidated Fund, the increase there? It is a bit more than, obviously, if you divide the last couple of years by two. But can we have an explanation for that increase, given that a couple of years ago, it was at 6.7, so it is in effect another million?

4290

**Hon. Chief Minister:** Mr Speaker, there is the inflationary increases in 2019-20, which are not reflected; and the addition of a total of three additional officers in the period to the whole of the organisation, that have been paid for out of that contribution.

**Mr Chairman:** The Borders and Coastguard Agency stands part of the Bill.

4295

**Clerk:** Gibraltar Health Authority.

4300

**Hon. E J Phillips:** Mr Chairman, insofar as the Establishment on the very last line before the carry-forward element is there, and you will see an italicised 'Consultant Clinical Psychologist' and there has been a little bit of a debate in the context of the principles. But can the Government confirm why it has not seen fit to replace that key position within the Establishment, given the fact that the associate psychologists would need to be under the supervision of a consultant clinical psychologist?

4305

**Hon. Miss S J Sacramento:** Mr Chairman, I regret to inform the hon. Gentleman that his conspiracy theory does not wash, and I will explain why. Mr Chairman, a psychologist – (*Interjection*)

4310

Well, no, Mr Speaker, because then he went on to say about this crucial post being abolished etc., etc. and it is not, and I will explain now, Mr Speaker. He is making assumptions before knowing the answer, and I will now explain, Mr Speaker. A psychologist is an allied health professional and, as such, it is not appropriate to refer to an allied health professional as a consultant. So a psychologist is a *clinical* psychologist, as opposed to a *consultant* clinical psychologist, so that inappropriate description in the previous Book has been corrected. A consultant clinical psychologist goes to zero here, but if we turn over the page to page 215, and we go to clinical psychologist we will see that it goes up from two to three. So it is reflected there.

4315

There are three people in total, whereas before it was represented as two and one, it is now represented as three and they all carry the same title, which is the appropriate title for an allied health professional and not a doctor. Usually a consultant is the term that is used in reference to doctors, and not allied health professionals.

4320

So the hon. Gentleman can rest assured that the post has not been abolished. It has just been correctly renamed in the Book.

4325

**Hon. E J Phillips:** Just one further. I am grateful for the clarification. It is obviously an error by whoever drafted this section, but if you look at 216, Supernumerary Posts, Clinical Psychologists, it is anticipated that there will be two this financial year.

Can the Minister give a bit more information as to the supernumerary nature? So are these two new clinical psychologists that will be working to supplement ... Sorry, 216 in Establishment,

halfway down 'Supernumerary Posts' towards the far right and then a further two clinical psychologists that are provided on a full-time basis.

4330

**Hon. Miss S J Sacramento:** Mr Chairman, that is because people are already there, over and above the establishment. I do know, however, that since one of them has retired and left Gibraltar, we will have to re-evaluate what we do going forward with the post. But this column here on 216 represents people who are actually there, and that is why they are supernumerary to the complement, they are over and above and in addition to.

4335

**Hon. D A Feetham:** Mr Speaker, I just have a question.

Page 220, Recurrent Payments, when I was preparing for the response during the Budget speech, I noticed that if one looks at the 2019-21 figures for Europol Paediatric Centre and the PCC, so the estimate comes to £2.6 million for two years but it then comes in at £1.65 million, which is the forecast outturn.

4340

Now, first of all can the Minister explain essentially what appears to be a reduction of about a million? Secondly, if the Minister would care to look at the actual estimate for this year, which is obviously for one year, the estimate is £1.284 million for both. When, if we divide the forecast outturn for the last two years by two, it comes in at £825,000. So there is an increase. I just wonder why the fluctuation between those various years?

4345

**Hon. Chief Minister:** Mr Speaker, because we were not in actual occupation paying rent for the full part of the financial years in question that he is referring to, in the earlier years.

4350

**Hon. D A Feetham:** But if one looks at the – *(Interjection)* Well, I suppose it could be the explanation. I was just looking at the estimate that came in at £2.6 million, the estimate for 2019-21 is £1.3 million per year, obviously, if we divide it by two. I suppose the explanation is that when it was estimated it was just an estimate, whereas now there is an actual and it just takes into account part of the two years. Is that the answer?

4355

**Hon. Chief Minister:** I think that is right, Mr Speaker, and additionally it may be that there might have been entry costs, so to speak, that we might have provided for some costs as we took over those facilities. But that, what he is seeing for 2021-22 is the first what we might call full-year effect. Yes? And that is the number that he needs to look at going forward. Those are the numbers each year that he needs to monitor. He should not rely on the first one because they are the first years, not full year of rent, but may include some moving-in costs, etc.

4360

**Hon. K Azopardi:** Can I ask on Sponsored Patients, which is subhead 37? So there, it went from £11.4 million in 2018-19 and then over the last couple of years it is £33 million, which averages out to over £16 million per year. So it is a jump of £5 million per year. I am not sure how that breaks down in terms of 2019-20 and 2020-21, but can the Minister perhaps explain to us why the big jump is there? And how confident is she that the £13.5 is a fairly solid estimate, which is already £2 million over 2018-19. But, given the expenditure over the last couple of years, which seems very high, I am not sure where that is coming from.

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**Hon. Miss S J Sacramento:** Mr Speaker, I am looking into why there is this jump in sponsored patients in the last two years. One of the things that I do know is that there are, from time to time, some very complicated cases where for a handful of cases the costs do mount up. But having said that, I am looking at the reasons for this increase in expenditure in the last two years. It is not something that I have had the opportunity to do yet, of course I have not been in post for a year yet and pretty much all of my attention has been devoted to COVID. But now that I am being able to look at things with more detail, I am looking at the reason as to why these costs are much higher in the last two years.

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4380 **Mr Chairman:** Gibraltar Health Authority stands part of the Bill.

**Clerk:** Gibraltar Health Authority – Elderly Residential Services section.

4385 **Mr Chairman:** Gibraltar Health Authority – Elderly Residential Services section stands part of the Bill.

**Clerk:** Care Agency.

4390 **Mr Chairman:** Care Agency stands part of the Bill.

**Clerk:** Housing Works Agency.

**Mr Chairman:** Housing Works Agency stands part of the Bill.

4395 **Clerk:** Gibraltar Sports and Leisure Authority.

**Mr Chairman:** Gibraltar Sports and Leisure Authority stands part of the Bill.

4400 **Clerk:** Gibraltar Electricity Authority.

**Hon. K Azopardi:** Well, perhaps only in relation to 17 on Fuel, there appears to be a big jump from 2018-19, although I imagine extrapolated against the last couple of years, it is a reduction. Perhaps the Government could explain that aspect? How is it going to work out cheaper than the last couple of years?

4405 **Hon. A J Isola:** If you look at the 2021, which is on page 248 under Fuel Costs, (*Interjection*) number 23, can you see that in 2018-19? (*Interjection*) No, 2018-19 – 21,563?

4410 Yes, if the hon. Member is looking at fuel on recurrent payments, on subparagraph 17, which is the £6 million. If you then go to the next page right at the top, subparagraph 23 if you go to 2018-19, you are looking at 21.5. So 21.5 plus 6 is 31, and you then compare that to the 14.5 plus the 500,15 – that has dropped from the 21 plus 6 to the 14.5 with the 5.

That is being added to the temporary generators with the capacity they had to the full new energy power station. (*Interjection*) Less diesel.

4415 **Hon. K Azopardi:** And with the cost of fuel coming down, is that what it is? Can the Minister also explain on page 27, Shell LNG, there, so that particular figure £6.5.

**Hon. A J Isola:** Mr Chairman, obviously we are buying L&G, not diesel, so there is a difference in the pricing. The cost that he is referring to here, the 6.5 is the cost of the LNG plant.

4420 It is the annual payment for the plant, not fuel.

**Hon. R M Clinton:** Sorry, Mr Chairman, if the Minister could clarify: my understanding was that the Shell LNG plant was a joint venture with Credit Finance and Shell. So how is this a contribution to the capital, what appears to be the capital cost of the plant? Is that what he is saying?

4425 And is also the £11.5 million contribution to ES, also capital contribution to the plant?

**Hon. A J Isola:** To be able to use the plant, in respect of the ownership of it, the GA pays for the use of the plant. That is what we pay to use the plant. (*Interjection*) Then that is the repayment to the joint venture that you have just referred to, of which we own half.

4430 **Hon. R M Clinton:** So, just to be clear, this obviously has nothing to do with LNG itself as a fuel? This is just – I do not know how to describe it – a usage fee for the plant?

I presume that we get the LNG, I imagine, through line 17's fuel, or is that a combination of LNG and diesel fuel, other fuel? And that we get the fuel at cost? Is that what the Minister is saying?

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**Hon. A J Isola:** Thank you, Mr Chairman.

In the subparagraph 27, the £6.5, there is nothing now relating to fuel cost. That is the sheer use of the facility, the company is called Shell LNG Ltd, which makes that payment. The entire fuel costs for both diesel and LNG is in subhead 17, Fuel, £14.5 million for this year.

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**Hon. R M Clinton:** I am grateful to the Minister, Mr Chairman.

In terms of line 17, can he provide – if he has an analysis, of that £14.5 million between LNG and other fuel?

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**Hon. A J Isola:** LNG is around £13 million of that £14.5 million and diesel is the 1-point-something.

**Hon. D A Feetham:** May I also ask in relation to ... You see, the Minister explained these figures the £6 million he said should be added, that is at 2018-19 should be added to the £21 million; and that therefore there was not as much of an increase in respect of the other years where you see fuel, which is £30.5 million and then it is £14,500,000 for one year, so you multiply that by two is it nearly gets to the £30 million. But what we are not seeing is much of a reduction in the cost of fuel through the move into LNG.

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Or am I mistaken in relation to this and I am reading this incorrectly? I thought one of the points about moving into LNG was also that the cost of fuel would come down?

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**Hon. Chief Minister:** Yes, Mr Speaker, he can see that effect if he looks at the 2021, which is the actual for subhead 23 the Fuel Costs that he sees there, at subhead 23. He adds that, Mr Speaker, to the actual for line 17, Fuel, that is the total amount of fuel that we were paying before. Yes? So that is the almost £27 million, £28 million. Yes? That is what he needs to compare to the £500,000 left under 23, and the £14,500,000. When you look at that, that is a total of £15 million versus £28 million. *That* is the reduction – ignoring the year in the middle which gives you double the numbers – that is the reduction in one year of going from the fuel that we had before to the fuel that we have now. So almost, Mr Speaker, *half* the fuel. But for more megawatts and no pollution, Mr Speaker, no knocks.

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**Hon. D J Feetham:** So £18,550,000 million, added to the £30, 520,000 compared to the £500,000 and the £14,500,000.

**Hon. Chief Minister:** No, no, no, Mr Speaker, ignore the two-year effect, because the two-year effect – (*Interjection*) no, no, no ignore the two year effect, because the two-year effect is also when we were moving from one fuel to another. So you are not going to have a good picture of one year's worth of fuel by just dividing by two. Ignore that year, because that is the transition year from diesel to LNG.

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Go to the last full year of diesel. The last full year of diesel is better given by going to 2018-19 and if you look at that, Mr Speaker, it is £21,500,000 million plus £6,000,000. So £27,500,000 million. That is a full year effect of diesel.

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Come now to this year, a full-year effect of very little diesel – just enough to keep the engines that might need to operate on diesel – and *all* LNG – it is a total of £15 million, the half million that is left and the £14, 500, 00 million that is there.

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So that is a reduction of almost half, and for more megawatts. More bang for our proverbial buck, Mr Speaker. *(Interjection)*

4485 Yes, indeed, of course, Mr Speaker. The £6.5 million that we were looking at earlier, which is a payment to the plant, we get half of the profit that arises in respect of that £6.5 million payment into the LNG facility.

**Mr Chairman:** Gibraltar Electricity Authority stands part of the Bill.

4490 **Clerk:** Gibraltar Port Authority.

**Mr Chairman:** Gibraltar Port Authority stands part of the Bill.  
Clauses 6 and 7 stand part of the Bill.

4495 **Clerk:** The Schedule, as amended.

**Mr Chairman:** The Schedule, as amended, stands part of the Bill.

**Clerk:** The long title.

4500 **Mr Chairman:** The long title stands part of the Bill.

**Supplementary Appropriation (2016/2017) Bill 2021;  
Supplementary Appropriation (2017/2018) Bill 2021;  
Supplementary Appropriation (2018/2019) Bill 2021;  
Appropriation Bill 2021 –  
Third Reading approved: Bills passed**

**Clerk:** The Hon. the Chief Minister.

**The Chief Minister (Mr F R Picardo):** Mr Speaker,

4505 I have the honour to report that the Supplementary Appropriation (2016/2017) Bill 2021; the Supplementary Appropriation (2017/2018) Bill 2021; the Supplementary Appropriation (2018/2019) Bill 2021; and Appropriation Bill 2021 have been considered in Committee and agreed to, with some amendments, and I now move that they be read a third time and passed.

Mr Speaker, I call a division in respect of each of those votes.

4510 **Mr Speaker:** I now put the question, which is that the Supplementary Appropriation (2016/2017) Bill 2021; the Supplementary Appropriation (2017/2018) Bill 2021; the Supplementary Appropriation (2018/2019) Bill 2021; and the Appropriation Bill 2021 be read a third time and passed.

4515 Those in favour of the Supplementary Appropriation –  
A division has been called for the four Bills.

**Clerk:** The Supplementary Appropriation (2016/2017) Bill 2021:

*A division was called for and voting resulted as follows:*

**FOR**

Hon. P J Balban  
Hon. Sir J J Bossano  
Hon. Prof. J E Cortes  
Hon. V Daryanani  
Hon. Dr J J Garcia  
Hon. A J Isola  
Hon. G H Licudi  
Hon. S E Linares  
Hon. F R Picardo  
Hon. Miss S J Sacramento

**AGAINST**

Hon. K Azopardi  
Hon. D J Bossino  
Hon. R M Clinton  
Hon. D A Feetham  
Hon. E J Phillips  
Hon. E J Reyes

**ABSTENTION**

Hon. Ms M D Hassan Nahon

4520

**Mr Speaker:** The result of the division on the Supplementary Appropriation (2016/2017) Bill is as follows: there are 10 ayes, 6 noes and 1 abstention. The Bill is passed by Government majority.

**Clerk:** Third Reading of the Supplementary Appropriation (2017/2018) Bill 2021:

*A division was called for and voting resulted as follows:*

**FOR**

Hon. P J Balban  
Hon. Sir J J Bossano  
Hon. Prof. J E Cortes  
Hon. V Daryanani  
Hon. Dr J J Garcia  
Hon. A J Isola  
Hon. G H Licudi  
Hon. S E Linares  
Hon. F R Picardo  
Hon. Miss S J Sacramento

**AGAINST**

Hon. K Azopardi  
Hon. D J Bossino  
Hon. R M Clinton  
Hon. D A Feetham  
Hon. E J Phillips  
Hon. E J Reyes

**ABSTENTION**

Hon. Ms M D Hassan Nahon

4525

**Mr Speaker:** The result for the Third Reading of the Supplementary Appropriation (2017/2018) Bill is: 10 yeses, 6 noes and 1 abstention. The Supplementary Appropriation Bill is therefore passed by Government majority.

**Clerk:** Third Reading of the Supplementary Appropriation (2018/2019) Bill:

**FOR**

Hon. P J Balban  
Hon. Sir J J Bossano  
Hon. Prof. J E Cortes  
Hon. V Daryanani  
Hon. Dr J J Garcia  
Hon. A J Isola  
Hon. G H Licudi  
Hon. S E Linares  
Hon. F R Picardo  
Hon. Miss S J Sacramento

**AGAINST**

Hon. K Azopardi  
Hon. D J Bossino  
Hon. R M Clinton  
Hon. D A Feetham  
Hon. E J Phillips  
Hon. E J Reyes

**ABSTENTION**

Hon. Ms M D Hassan Nahon

4530

**Mr Speaker:** The division result on the Supplementary Appropriation Bill (2018/2019) is as follows: 10 ayes, 6 noes and 1 abstention. The Supplementary Appropriation (2018/2019) Bill 2020 is therefore passed by Government majority.

**Clerk:** Third Reading of the Appropriation Bill 2021:

**FOR**

Hon. P J Balban  
Hon. Sir J J Bossano  
Hon. Prof. J E Cortes  
Hon. V Daryanani  
Hon. Dr J J Garcia  
Hon. A J Isola  
Hon. G H Licudi  
Hon. S E Linares  
Hon. F R Picardo  
Hon. Miss S J Sacramento

**AGAINST**

Hon. K Azopardi  
Hon. D J Bossino  
Hon. R M Clinton  
Hon. D A Feetham  
Hon. E J Phillips  
Hon. E J Reyes

**ABSTENTION**

Hon. Ms M D Hassan Nahon

**Mr Speaker:** The result for the Appropriation Bill 2021 through a division is as follows: there were 10 ayes, 6 noes and 1 abstention. Therefore that means that the Appropriation Bill 2021 has been passed by Government majority. (*Banging on desks*)

**ADJOURNMENT**

4535 **The Chief Minister (Mr F R Picardo):** Mr Speaker, I move that the House should now adjourn until tomorrow at 3.30 in the afternoon, where we shall start to deal with hon. Members' Questions.

4540 **Mr Speaker:** I now propose the question which is that this House do now adjourn to Tuesday, 27th July at 3.30 p.m.

I now put the question which is that this House do now adjourn until Tuesday, 27th July at 3.30 p.m. Those in favour? (**Members:** Aye.) Those against? Passed.

This House will now adjourn to Tuesday 27th July at 3.30 p.m.

*The House adjourned at 8.31 p.m.*