



CONSTITUTIONAL COMMISSION

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THE SPEAKER OF THE PARLIAMENT OF THE CAYMAN ISLANDS EXPLANATORY NOTES



The Parliament of the Cayman Islands

Foremost among the changes brought about by the recent amendment of the Cayman Islands Constitution¹, has been the renaming of the Legislative Assembly as the Parliament.² As the exploregov.ky website explains:

This is important because often the term Legislative Assembly is considered a lower legislative body to a parliament. The term Parliament better recognises what the Legislative Assembly is and avoids confusion when our Elected Representatives travel overseas. A Member of Parliament for the Cayman Islands is clearly understood by more people as it is used by the majority of Commonwealth Countries that have the Westminster system of government, such as Bermuda, Canada, Australia, Jamaica, and New Zealand.³

The Parliament of the Cayman Islands is a unicameral legislature, which means that there is a single legislative chamber, as opposed to a lower and an upper house (or a bicameral legislature). The single chamber in the Cayman Islands Parliament comprises 21 Members; 19 of whom are now elected in single-member constituencies (rather than the mixture of single and various different sized multi-member constituencies that operated previously) and there are 2 additional Ex-Officio Members (the Deputy Governor and the Attorney General) who are appointed by the Governor.⁴

In addition to the recent constitutional amendments, the administration of the Parliament has also been updated via the enactment of the Parliament (Management) Act, 2020, which came into force on 1 January 2021.⁵ One important aspect of the greater administrative independence generated by the Parliament (Management) Act, 2020 is the establishment of a Management Commission to be responsible for the administration and management of the Parliament, with a Council composed of: (a) the Speaker; (b) the Premier; (c) the Leader of the Opposition; (d) the Deputy Speaker; (e) three members of the Legislative Assembly appointed in writing by the Speaker, acting in accordance with the advice of the Premier; (f) two members of the Legislative Assembly appointed in writing by the Speaker, acting in accordance with the advice of the Leader of the Opposition; and (g) the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly (ex-officio, non-voting); charged with carrying out the general functions of the Management Commission.

Under section 5(3) of the Parliament (Management) Act, 2020, the Speaker is designated as the chairperson of the Council, a role that is consistent with the importance and centrality of the position of Speaker in parliaments and assemblies across the Commonwealth and indeed in the Cayman Islands. Notwithstanding the development of the Management Commission and Council, section 3(2) of the Parliament (Management) Act, 2020 also protects the traditional position of the Speaker on the basis that nothing contained in the Parliament (Management) Act, 2020 “shall be construed as affecting any power conferred on the Speaker ... by any Law in force in the Islands”. Together, therefore, the Cayman Islands Constitution (Amendment) Order 2020 and the Parliament (Management) Act, 2020 have modernised the legislative branch of government in the Cayman Islands and further consolidated the position of the Speaker within the new Parliament.

The Speaker

The position of Speaker in the Cayman Islands is of historical significance for several reasons. Prior to 1991, when the first Speaker was appointed, the legislature was presided over by the Governor, and prior to the Governor, the Commissioner. The inception of the Speakership position thereby created a separation of the local legislature from Her Majesty the Queen’s representative in the Cayman Islands. It also facilitated the appointment of a local person to this prominent position and, notably, the appointment of the Hon. Sybil McLaughlin, MBE, JP as the first Speaker of

the then Legislative Assembly on 15 February 1991 was also the first appointment of a woman to such a position in the Commonwealth.⁶ The Hon. Sybil McLaughlin served as Speaker from 1991 to 1996 and has been succeeded as Speaker by seven successors to date⁷ and it is interesting to note that of these seven, a further four of the appointees (making a total of five of the eight Speakers) have also been women.

Under the constitutional arrangements in the Cayman Islands, the Speaker can be an elected Member, which is the case in the United Kingdom's House of Commons, but may also be someone unelected, who is nevertheless entitled to be elected to Parliament.⁸ While most of the Speakers in the Cayman Islands have been elected Members, neither the Hon. Sybil McLaughlin nor the Hon. Mary Lawrence, MBE, JP (Speaker between 2009-2013) were elected Members and are therefore the exceptions.⁹ This divergence from the practice in the United Kingdom's House of Commons is not unique and is an approach that has been utilised in many smaller jurisdictions across the Commonwealth Caribbean at various times in their constitutional development.

While arrangements in respect of the Speaker may differ in some forms so as to accommodate the particular needs of small jurisdictions — it not always being practicable to assign an elected Member to the position where there is only a limited pool of elected Members — the general principles of independence and impartiality¹⁰ should be applicable to all Speakers, irrespective of the size of the jurisdiction.¹¹ In explaining how the establishment of the Office of Speaker

in Commonwealth Parliaments has been derived from the Parliament at Westminster, Dr Hamid Ghany advises that:

These qualities of political independence and service to the House have come to embody what Speakership is all about. Indeed, it is vitally important that in parliamentary systems of government there should be a presiding officer who can enjoy the dignity of a Chair which is respected by all sides of the House owing to his or her conduct and impartiality in the performance of duty. The Speaker in parliamentary systems ought not to be supportive of the majority or the minority in the House, as such favour can tilt the balance of power one way or the other.

As the independent arbiter of the Parliament, the Speaker is therefore expected to act impartially in the exercise of various important functions that are central to the effective operation of a parliamentary democracy, including: (i) the maintenance of decorum in debates; (ii) the calling of Members to speak; (iii) the giving of rulings on points of order and allegations of breaches of privilege; (iv) the naming and suspending of members for misconduct; (v) appointing Members to committees; (vi) accepting or refusing motions on the Order Paper; (vii) regulating questions in the House; and (viii) generally acting as servant of the Parliament or its spokesperson.

In addition to the Standing Orders that regulate proceedings, many of the rules that have traditionally framed and governed the role of the Speaker in the House of Commons, especially regarding the independence and

impartiality of this position, are contained in conventions and customs, which, at least in the British system itself, have evolved over a long period of time. In contrast, many of the jurisdictions which were previously British colonies and, indeed, those that are presently United Kingdom Overseas Territories, like the Cayman Islands, have not enjoyed such a long constitutional history with a Speaker in post. Across the small island jurisdictions of the Commonwealth Caribbean, in particular, the inception of a Speaker has been a comparatively recent development, prompted in large part by the decolonisation movement and the desire to replicate the Westminster system of government in the independence constitutions. However, as Dr Ghany has also noted, "The development of political institutions may be copied, but there is no guarantee of assimilation into the local political culture"¹² and, consequently, the Speaker in such jurisdictions has not operated as an identical replica of the classic Westminster prototype.

In addition to the ability to elect a Speaker from outside of Parliament, which remains a feature of the Cayman Islands Constitution under the 2009 Constitution and the subsequent amendments thereto, there are other aspects of the Speaker's role in the Cayman Islands that have departed from the norms of the Speakership as originally conceived. By way of further example, in the United Kingdom's House of Commons, the independence and impartiality of the Speaker is insulated by the convention that the Speaker's constituency is not contested at an election and the Speaker is therefore re-elected unopposed. However, in smaller jurisdictions, where the numbers required to acquire a majority in the legislative

assembly are more acutely impacted by the outcome in one constituency; where party politics may not be as rigid as is the case in the United Kingdom; and where politicians are thereby often reliant upon their individual performance in the House in the preceding term as a campaign platform for re-election; it has not always proved practicable for the Speaker to be completely detached from the political arena. Hence the position in the Cayman Islands, whereby if the Speaker is an elected Member of Parliament, the Speaker is still obliged to contest their seat at a future election.

There are, however, provisions in the Constitution that are designed to shield the Speaker from day-to-day politics. Section 65(2)(f) of the Constitution, which provides for the removal of the Speaker by the elected Members of Parliament, notably does so only upon the passing of a motion of no confidence by the votes of two-thirds of the elected Members. As such, the Speaker cannot be removed on the whim of a simple majority, thereby protecting the integrity of the position.

It follows that the position of the Speaker in a small jurisdiction like the Cayman Islands is not straightforward. However, there is still, at the very least, a conventional expectation that the Speaker will nevertheless respect the principles of independence and impartiality. A question that has arisen on several occasions recently is whether the constitutional rules relating to the Speakership in the Cayman Islands are sufficiently robust to ensure that these principles of independence and impartiality, and the integrity of the position in general, are appropriately respected. In the sections that follow this question is consid-

ered in the context of: (i) the election of the Speaker; and; (ii) a series of recent events in which the role of the Speaker has been a prominent feature. While it is not the function of these Explanatory Notes to form judgments on any of these events, the events do nevertheless provide a basis for reviewing the Speakership and, to this end, points arising for further consideration are identified at the end of each of the following sections.

The Election of the Speaker

The Constitutional Commission has previously expressed concerns regarding the constitutional arrangements for the election of the Speaker.¹³ In summary, these concerns revolve around the rules relating to the appointment of the Premier and the Ministers of Cabinet following a General Election and the potential for the Speakership to become a factor in this political process¹⁴ and the ensuing possibility that the independence and impartiality of the Speaker could be compromised. This scenario will tend to come to the fore when there is no clear majority in Parliament following a General Election and a prospective Premier is seeking to gather together sufficient numbers of elected members in order to form the next government, whether this is under section 49(2) or 49(3) of the Constitution.

Where a political party gains a majority of the seats of elected members of the Parliament, the Governor shall, in accordance with section 49(2) of the Constitution, appoint as Premier the elected member of the Parliament recommended by a majority of the elected members

who are members of that party. However, if no political party gains such a majority or if no recommendation is made under section 49(2), section 49(3) of the Constitution states that “the Speaker shall cause a ballot to be held among the elected members of Parliament to determine which elected member commands the support of the majority of such members, and shall record the vote of each member voting; and, where such a ballot is held, the Governor shall appoint as Premier the elected member who obtains a majority of the votes of the elected members”.

In either case, the numbers required to appoint the Premier and form a government (currently ten for a simple majority) could be impacted by whether the Speaker is ultimately appointed from within or outside of the members of Parliament. An internal selection could theoretically be a swing member that enables a particular party or grouping to form the government and could even involve a member joining a party after the General Election in order to enable that party to reach the threshold of members required to appoint the Premier under section 49(2) of the Constitution on the understanding that this member would then be supported in the subsequent election of the Speaker; while an external choice for the Speakership could operate in a similar fashion to bolster the numbers required to form the government, or even as leverage one way or another in the political bargaining that inevitably follows where there is no clear winner at a General Election. In both scenarios, while this may not necessarily mean that the Speaker’s independence and impartiality is compromised in practice, where a Speakership has been part of the formative process for a particular government, it is

difficult to avoid at least the perception that independence and consequently impartiality could be perceived as compromised.

These Explanatory Notes have emphasised the particular challenges of small jurisdictions and how these can impact the Speakership and in so doing it is acknowledged that some deviations from complete independence are inevitable in the Cayman Islands. However, this does not mean that the current constitutional rules, which embroil the Speakership in formation of the government, are necessarily ideal. In the premises, the following points are worthy of further consideration:

1. Whether, on balance, it would be preferable to only be able to select a Speaker from outside of the members of Parliament?
2. Whether, if possible¹⁵, it would be desirable to detach the election of the Speaker from the post-election negotiations, the appointment of the Premier and the formation of the government?

Recent Events Involving the Speaker

Given the importance of the Speakership, it is not surprising that the Speaker features prominently in the news on a regular basis. For the most part, this usually arises in connection with the actions of the Speaker inside Parliament and in this section these Explanatory Notes will, by way of example, consider the

decision of the Speaker in November 2020 to decline to lay a Report from the Public Accounts Committee (“PAC”) on the table of the House. It is unfortunate, however, that the actions of the Speaker outside Parliament have also proved newsworthy in the course of the last few years and the conviction in December 2020 of the incumbent Speaker for, inter alia, common assault, along with the underlying incident itself, have given rise to a number of issues that are also considered herein.

The Speaker and the PAC

The Constitution, together with the supplementary provisions in the Public Management and Finance Act (2020 Revision), establish an Auditor General, who is independent and who is charged with gathering the financial information required to hold the Government to account. The Auditor General submits this information to Parliament and the PAC, so that the members of Parliament are properly informed and so that they can thereby hold the government to account. Under the Westminster system of parliamentary democracy, there is a symbiotic relationship between the Auditor General and the PAC, whereby the PAC depends on high quality audit reporting to be effective and the Auditor General in turn requires an effective PAC to ensure that Government takes audit outcomes seriously.

Procedurally, when the Auditor General completes an audit report, it is submitted to Parliament and, in accordance with the relevant Standing Orders, this report is then referred

to the PAC. When the PAC has completed its review, the PAC also prepares an associated report and the two reports are then sent to the Business Committee of Parliament for tabling at the next meeting of the House. In the normal course of events, these reports are duly placed on the Order Paper. However, in October 2020, the Speaker declined to place a particular report pertaining to the Efficiency and Effectiveness of the Utility Regulation and Competition Office (OfReg) on the Order Paper, asserting that he first had to examine and verify the report before it became a public document.

The PAC objected to this purported screening process and expressed its concern for “transparency, good governance and the rule of law” if the decision of the Speaker was allowed to stand and set a precedent. The PAC therefore sought the opinion of the Hon. Attorney General, who concluded that: “In essence we are unable to find any provision in the Constitution or the Legislative Assembly Parliament Standing Orders which requires the Honourable Speaker to ‘verify’ the information contained in the PAC report prior to its tabling in the Parliament in circumstances where the business committee had decided that the report should be placed on the Order paper for a particular day”.¹⁶

In the premises, while independence is an undoubted virtue in respect of the Speakership and it is also acknowledged that the Speaker has wide-ranging discretionary powers relating to the operations of Parliament, this does not mean that the Speaker has unfettered discretionary power. Ultimately the Speaker serves Parliament and it would be antithetical if the Speaker’s actions could serve to

undermine parliamentary democracy. Given this conundrum, further consideration should be given to:

3. Whether the Constitution and/or the Standing Orders should be clarified to ensure that the PAC’s constitutional function is not frustrated by the Speaker.

Issues Arising from the Speaker’s Criminal Charges and Conviction

The following summary of facts is presented to illustrate the position of the Speaker and as a basis for considering whether some reform is potentially desirable. It is not the objective of these Explanatory Notes to express any value judgement on the underlying events themselves.

In February 2020, an incident occurred, which resulted in the incumbent Speaker being charged with three counts of common assault and one count of disorderly conduct under the liquor licensing law and which ultimately led to his criminal conviction. Soon after the incident itself, the Speaker precipitously announced that he would be taking an immediate leave of absence from the duties of Speakership and would also be undertaking grief counseling and emotional stress management sessions. This leave of absence and the context in which it was taken immediately gave rise to a constitutional debate surrounding the fact that there were

no provisions in the Constitution dealing with this situation.

With the assistance of the Commissions Secretariat, the Constitutional Commission undertook some research to ascertain whether this scenario was catered for in other Overseas Territories or small island jurisdictions in the region and it was concluded that this was a unique situation that was not generally anticipated at all.¹⁷

In the premises, it would therefore appear prudent to now consider:

4. Whether the Constitution and/or the Standing Orders should make specific provision for the Speaker to take a leave of absence and for any consequential arrangements for the Speakership?
5. Whether the Constitution and/or the Standing Orders should make specific and more sensitive provision for mental health challenges?¹⁸

In May 2020, following an investigation of the incident by the Royal Cayman Islands Police Service and the referral of a file to the Director of Public Prosecutions, various charges were laid against the incumbent Speaker. Notwithstanding that the threshold for the laying of charges had now been met, the Speaker did not resign at this time. The matter proceeded to trial in December 2020, at which time the Speaker altered his plea in respect of three of the four charges to guilty, having previously plead not guilty to all charges in July 2020. The Speaker also agreed to be sentenced on the full facts as alleged by the complainant. At a sentencing hearing on 21 December 2020, the Speaker was given a suspended

custodial sentence (60 days for each assault conviction, to run concurrently) and a curfew order and, in respect of his disorderly conduct at a licensed premises, a fine of CI\$700.00. In addition, the Speaker was also ordered to pay compensation in the amount of CI\$4,279.00 to the victim. Despite the seriousness of the issues, the guilty pleas, the acceptance of the facts and the criminal convictions, the Speaker still declined to resign.

Insofar as the sentence handed down is concerned, this was not sufficient to disqualify the Speaker as a Member of Parliament under section 65(2)(c) and, by extension, section 62 of the Constitution; and, while the Speaker may resign the Speakership in accordance with section 65(2)(b) of the Constitution if he or she informs the Parliament in writing, the Constitution does not require the Speaker to do so. In the circumstances, the only other avenue by which the Speaker may be removed under the Constitution is section 65(2)(f), which allows for the removal of the Speaker on the passing, by the votes of two-thirds of the elected members of the Parliament, of a motion expressing no confidence in him or her as Speaker. The significance of requiring the support of two-thirds of the elected members has been noted above as a provision that insulates the Speakership from day-to-day politics and supports the independence of the position. However, in practice this also means that where a Speaker determines that he or she is set on not resigning and there is not the political will to pressure the Speaker into so doing, it may be difficult to raise the requisite numbers for a vote of no confidence to succeed.

Previous attempts to force such a vote of no confidence when the incident first occurred

were unsuccessful as the criminal prosecution of the Speaker was still in process and the matter was therefore sub judice at the time. However, following the Speaker's sentencing, a motion of no confidence in the Speaker was filed in Parliament on 28 January 2021, which noted that the Speaker was now serving a suspended custodial sentence imposed by the Courts of the Cayman Islands; asserted that the conviction of the Speaker had brought the integrity and sanctity of the role of Speaker of Parliament into public and international disrepute; and further that this demonstrated a lack of character and suitability to operate in a public leadership role and manage the affairs of this Parliament.

For various reasons that are beyond the scope of these Explanatory Notes but which are a matter of public record¹⁹, this motion was not debated and thus not put to the vote. Instead, Parliament did not sit again and the impending General Election was brought forward. Parliament was thereby dissolved and in accordance with section 65(2)(a) of the Constitution, the Speaker vacated office. It should be noted that at the ensuing 2021 General Election the former Speaker was re-elected as a Member of Parliament and that, subsequently, he was also re-elected as Speaker.

The important issue arising therefore is:

6. Whether there ought to be some additional mechanism, constitutional or otherwise, whereby a Speaker can be held to account for the types of actions documented in these recent events?

In this regard, it is notable that the Human Rights Commission, referenced "the behaviour which lead to the criminal conviction of the Honourable Speaker of Parliament" as "the accelerant for an early election" and, in commenting on the announcement of the dissolution of Parliament, took this opportunity to call for the development of a Parliamentary Code of Conduct.²⁰ The Commission for Standards in Public Life fully endorsed this recommendation and offered their support to its development. The Constitutional Commission also supports the implementation of such a code on an expedited basis and, in this context, the associated question also follows:

7. Whether a Parliamentary Code of Conduct would be sufficient to protect and preserve the integrity of the Speakership in all circumstances?

Conclusion

With the recent reforms to the status and operations of Parliament, the role of the Speaker has, if anything, assumed a greater prominence and the integrity of the Speaker is evidently central to the effective operation of parliamentary democracy in the Cayman Islands. While the independence and impartiality of the Speakership may be compromised somewhat in small island jurisdictions such as the Cayman Islands, these concepts remain important and should be protected and nurtured as far as possible.

The Constitutional Commission has long been concerned about the politicisation of the Speaker in the context of the formation of a new administration following a General Election and recent events involving the Speaker have underscored this concern in other circumstances, namely where the Speaker is vital to the sustainability of a government.²¹ Independence does not, however, mean that the Speaker should be unaccountable and there are also situations in which the parameters of the Speaker's role could be better defined, with additional constitutional checks and balances introduced. The questions for consideration in these Explanatory Notes are accordingly intended to stimulate debate and discussion on these important constitutional matters.



Endnotes

¹ The Cayman Islands Constitution is contained in Schedule 2 to the Cayman Islands Constitution Order 2009 (S.I. 2009 No. 1379), as amended (“the Constitution”). The second and most recent amendment to the Constitution was enacted by way of the Cayman Islands Constitution (Amendment) Order 2020, which the Privy Council approved on 11 November 2020 and which came into effect on 3 December 2020. For further detail and perspective on the recent changes to the Constitution, the Constitutional Commission has published its Responses to Requests for Comments on Potential Revisions to the Cayman Islands Constitution 2009 and related correspondence, an Explanatory Note on the Proposed Amendments to the Draft Constitution and a further Update, all of which can be accessed at: <http://www.constitutionalcommission.ky/constitutional-matters>.

² See the speech delivered by the then Premier, the Hon. Alden McLaughlin, on the occasion of the transition from Legislative Assembly to Parliament on 2 November 2020, which provides a concise history of the legislative branch of government in the Cayman Islands and the development thereof; and which can be accessed at: <https://cnslibrary.com/wp-content/uploads/Transition-from-Legislative-Assembly-to-the-Parliament-address-byPremier-Alden-McLaughlin-2-Nov-2020.pdf>.

³ <https://www.explore.gov.ky/constitutionalreform>.

⁴ The third Ex-Officio Member that used to be part of the constitutional arrangements in the Cayman Islands – the Financial Secretary – was effectively replaced by an elected Minister of Finance when the modernised 2009 Constitution came into effect.

⁵ Parliament (Management) Act, 2020 (Commencement) Order, 2020.

⁶ For further information on National Hero, the Hon. Sybil McLaughlin, see: <http://www.legislativeassembly.ky/portal/page/portal/lglhome/members/speakers/sybilmclaughlin>.

⁷ <http://www.legislativeassembly.ky/portal/page/portal/lglhome/members/speakers>.

⁸ See section 65(1)(a) of the Constitution.

⁹ Captain, the Hon. Mabry Kirkconnell, who held the Speakership between 1996 and 2001, was a long-standing elected member for Cayman Brac and Little Cayman, but subsequent to not running for re-election in the 2000 General Election, he was nevertheless then elected as Speaker from outside the House.

¹⁰ As paragraph 4.23 of Erskine May’s Treatise on the Law, Privileges, Proceedings and Usage of Parliament (25th edition, 2019) states: “The chief characteristics attaching to the office of Speaker in the House of Commons are authority and impartiality.”

¹¹ For further information on Speakers in various different jurisdictions, see the “Learn more about the Speaker and legislative infrastructures: section at: <http://www.constitutionalcommission.ky/sybil-ione-mclaughlin-mbe-jp>. 12 Ghany, Hamid A, “Parliamentary Crisis and the Removal of the Speaker: The Case of Trinidad and Tobago”, The Journal of Legislative Studies, Vol.3, No.2, Summer 1997, pp.112-138 (“Ghany”), at pp.114-115.

¹² Ghany, at pp.121.

¹³ See the table detailing suggested sections of the 2009 Constitution for review, which were submitted on 14 October 2014 and which can be accessed at: http://www.constitutionalcommission.ky/upimages/publicationdoc/CorrespondencetoHE_SuggestedSectionsofthe2009ConstitutionforReview_141014_1509221103_1509221103.pdf. See also the Constitutional Commission’s Responses to Requests for Comments on Potential Revisions to the Cayman Islands Constitution 2009, dated 27 June 2018, which can be accessed at: http://www.constitutionalcommission.ky/upimages/publicationdoc/ConstitutionalCommissionsResponsesToRequestsForCommentsOnPotentialRevisionstotheCaymanIslandsConstitution2009_270618_1543527160_1543527201.pdf.

¹⁴ For further information, see the Constitutional Commission’s Explanatory Notes on the Appointment of the Premier and other Ministers and the Election of the Speaker of Parliament following a General Election, dated 20 April 2021, which can be accessed at: http://www.constitutionalcommission.ky/upimages/publicationdoc/ConstitutionalCommission-ExplanatoryNotesontheAppointmentsofthePremierandMinistersandtheElectionoftheSpeakerofParliament_200420_21_1618953125_1618953142.pdf.

¹⁵ Section 65(2)(a) of the Constitution presently provides that the Speaker shall vacate office upon a dissolution of Parliament, which gives rise to the issue of having to elect a new Speaker thereafter.

¹⁶ PAC Press Statement, 5 November 2020.

¹⁷ The results of the Constitutional Commission’s research in this regard is available in tabular form on the Constitutional Commission’s website.

¹⁸ Section 62(1)(d) of the Constitution, which deals with disqualification of Members of Parliament and which applies to “a person certified to be insane or otherwise adjudged to be of unsound mind under any law in force in the Cayman Islands”, is evidently not appropriate in these particular circumstances.

¹⁹ See: <https://www.caymancompass.com/2021/01/28/no-confidence-motion-filed-against-bush>.

²⁰ The Human Rights Commission press release entitled: Announcement to Dissolve Parliament Underpins Need for a Parliamentary Code of Conduct, 16 February 2021, can be accessed at: <http://www.humanrightscommission.ky/announcement-to-dissolve-parliament?ajax=y&PageNumber=0>.

²¹ Responding to calls to sanction the Speaker following his criminal convictions, the Hon. Premier Alden McLaughlin explained: “I am not sure the country will be well served now by my taking action which precipitates the collapse of the government and the holding of early elections”, as reported at: <https://www.caymancompass.com/2020/12/21/premier-govt-unlikely-to-take-action-against-bush>.