

CHAPTER 4.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
(POWERS AND PRIVILEGES).

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CHAPTER 4.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
(POWERS AND PRIVILEGES).*

7 of 1953.

An Ordinance to Declare and Define certain Powers, Privileges and Immunities of the House of Representatives and of the Members of such Council, to secure Freedom of Speech in the House of Representatives, to regulate Admittance to the Precincts of the House of Representatives, to give Protection to the Persons Employed in the Publication of the Reports and other Papers of the House of Representatives, and for Purposes Incidental to or Connected with the Matters Aforesaid.

[17TH SEPTEMBER, 1953.]

PART I.—PRELIMINARY.

Short title
and applica-
tion.

1. This Ordinance may be cited as the House of Representatives (Powers and Privileges) Ordinance and shall apply to the Colony and Protectorate.

Interpreta-
tion.

2. In this Ordinance unless the context otherwise requires—

“ Clerk ” means the Clerk of the House of Representatives;

“ committee ” means a committee of the whole House of Representatives or any standing, select, or other committee of the House of Representatives;

Public Notice
68 of 1958.

“ House of Representatives ” means the House of Representatives of Sierra Leone constituted by the Sierra Leone (Constitution) Order in Council, 1958;

“ journals ” means the minutes of the House of Representatives or the official record of the votes or proceedings thereof;

* This Ordinance was enacted in 1953 to determine and regulate the powers and privileges of the then existing Legislative Council, in pursuance of the provisions of section 30A of Sierra Leone (Legislative Council) Order in Council, 1951 (P.N. 50 of 1951), as amended by section 3 of the Sierra Leone (Legislative Council) (Amendment) Order in Council, 1953, (P.N. 25 of 1953). These Orders in Council were revoked by the Sierra Leone (Constitution) Order in Council, 1956 (P.N. 9 of 1957), which in its turn was revoked by the (now existing) Sierra Leone (Constitution) Order in Council, 1958 (P.N. 68 of 1958). Each of the latter two Orders in Council saved, pending the making of other provisions, the Ordinance enacted in 1953; the (existing) 1958 Order in Council providing that it should have effect as if enacted in pursuance of the relevant section of the 1958 Order in Council and also that it should be “ deemed to have been so enacted, and be read and construed with the necessary adaptations and modifications ”. The Ordinance, of course, as enacted, referred throughout to the Legislative Council. In this edition it has been reproduced with the necessary adaptations.

“Member” means any Member of the House of Representatives;

“officer of the House of Representatives” means the Clerk or any other officer or person acting within the precincts of the House of Representatives under the orders of the President, and includes any constable on duty within the precincts of the House of Representatives;

“precincts of the House of Representatives” means the room in which the House of Representatives sits in session for the transaction of business, and includes the galleries adjacent thereto;

“Speaker” means the Speaker of the House of Representatives and includes the Deputy Speaker or other member presiding over the House of Representatives and the Chairman of any Committee thereof;

“Standing Orders” means the Standing Rules and Orders of the House of Representatives made under or deriving validity from section 28 of the Sierra Leone (Legislative Council) Order in Council, 1951; or any Standing Rules and Orders replacing them;

“stranger” means any person other than a Member or any officer of the House of Representatives.

PART II.—PRIVILEGES AND IMMUNITIES.

3. No civil or criminal proceedings may be instituted against any Member for words spoken before, or written in a report to, the House of Representatives or to a committee or by reason of any matter or thing brought by him herein by petition, bill, resolution, motion or otherwise. Immunity from legal proceedings.

4. No Member shall be liable to arrest for any civil debt, except a debt the contraction of which constitutes a criminal offence, whilst going to, attending at, or returning from a sitting of the House of Representatives or any committee. Privileges.

PART III.—REGULATION OF ADMITTANCE TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

5. No stranger shall be entitled, as of right, to enter or to remain within the precincts of the House of Representatives. Right to enter House of Representatives.

6. (1) The Speaker is hereby authorised to issue orders as he may in his discretion deem necessary for the regulation of the admittance of strangers to the precincts of the House of Representatives. Power of Speaker to regulate admittance to House of Representatives.

(2) Copies of orders made by the Speaker under this section shall be duly authenticated by the Clerk and exhibited in a conspicuous position in the precincts of the House of Representatives; and such copies when so authenticated and exhibited, shall be deemed to be sufficient notice to all persons affected thereby.

Power of President to order withdrawal from House of Representatives.

7. The Speaker may at any time order any stranger to withdraw from the precincts of the House of Representatives without assigning any reason therefor.

PART IV.—OFFENCES AND PENALTIES.

Offences relating to admittance of the House of Representatives.

8. Any person who, being a stranger—

(a) enters or attempts to enter the precincts of the House of Representatives in contravention of any orders of the Speaker; or

(b) fails or refuses to withdraw from the precincts of the House of Representatives when ordered to withdraw therefrom by the Speaker; or

(c) contravenes any rule made by the Speaker under the Standing Orders; or

(d) attends any sitting of the House of Representatives or any committee as the representative of any journal or newspaper after the general permission granted under the Standing Orders to the representative or representatives of that journal or newspaper has been revoked, shall be guilty of an offence and shall, on summary conviction, be liable to a fine of twenty-five pounds or to imprisonment for three months, or to both such fine and imprisonment.

Attempted intimidation of House of Representatives or any Committee.

9. (1) If any persons to the number of twelve or more shall come in a riotous, tumultuous or disorderly manner to the precincts of the House of Representatives while the House of Representatives or any committee is sitting, in order either to hinder or to promote the passing of any bill, resolution, or other matter depending before the House of Representatives or such committee, they shall each be guilty of an offence and shall, on summary conviction, each be liable to a fine of one hundred pounds or to imprisonment for twelve months, or to both such fine and imprisonment.

(2) If any person shall incite any other persons to come in a riotous, tumultuous or disorderly manner to the precincts of the House of Representatives while the House of Representatives or any committee is sitting in order either to hinder or to pro-

mote the passing of any bill, resolution or other matter depending before the House of Representatives or such committee, he shall be guilty of an offence and shall, on summary conviction, be liable to a fine of one hundred pounds, or to imprisonment for twelve months, or to both such fine and imprisonment.

10. Any person who—

Other offences.

(a) whether directly or indirectly offers to any Member or to any officer of the House of Representatives any bribe, fee, compensation, gift or reward in order to influence him in his conduct as such Member or officer, or for or in respect of the promotion of or opposition to any bill, resolution, matter, rules or thing submitted to or intended to be submitted to the House of Representatives or any committee; or

(b) assaults, obstructs, molests or insults any Member coming to, being within, or going from the precincts of the House of Representatives, or endeavours to compel any Member by force, insult or menace to declare himself in favour of or against any proposition or matter pending or expected to be brought before the House of Representatives or any committee; or

(c) assaults, interferes with, molests, resists or obstructs any officer of the House of Representatives while in the execution of his duty; or

(d) creates or joins in any disturbance which interrupts or is likely to interrupt the proceedings of the House of Representatives or any committee while the House of Representatives or such committee is sitting; or

(e) presents to the House of Representatives or a committee any false, untrue, fabricated or falsified document with intent to deceive the House of Representatives or such committee; or

(f) prints or publishes any libel, or publishes either by words spoken or by writing any false, scandalous or defamatory matter, reflecting on the character or proceedings of the House of Representatives or which tends to bring the House of Representatives into odium, contempt or ridicule:

Provided that nothing in this paragraph shall apply to a fair and accurate report of the proceedings of the House of Representatives published in any newspaper; or

(g) does any act which obstructs or impedes the House of Representatives or any committee in the performance of its functions, or which obstructs or impedes any Member or