

# Funding the Future

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The SNP sponsored debate on its Gaza ceasefire motion has now begun in the House of Commons, but not before another row has developed.

As I [noted earlier today](#), the SNP tabled this motion but Labour, the LibDems and the government all tabled amendments. What amendments might be debated is for the Speaker to decide but there are, of course, conventions that are usually followed.

Today the Speaker has decided that the Labour and government motions might be debated, and voted on in that order, before the substantive remaining motion is put to the House.

The consequence is that the SNP motion might be replaced by a Labour motion before the Government then gets the chance to replace the Labour motion with its own motion, which means that the Opposition party promoting this debate may never get the chance to have its own motion voted on. That is pretty much unprecedented. This Tweet explains that:



**Brigid Fowler**  
@Brigid\_Fowler

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So, we've got 3 levels of precedent in play:

- (arguably) unprecedented Speaker decision on actual procedural Q
- reinforcement of Bercow precedent that Speaker can innovate
- reinforcement of Hoyle innovation that Clerk may publicly record their view that Speaker has innovated

**Aubrey Allegretti** @breeallegretti · 58m

Here's the full advice from Lindsay Hoyle's top adviser - Tom Goldsmith says he's laying out his thoughts in line with the new process for registering his concern over a "substantial breach of the Standing Orders or a departure from long-established conventions".

Dear Mr Speaker, In January 2020, you wrote to my predecessor establishing a procedure by which he could record his views regarding any of your decisions which he felt comprised a substantial breach of the Standing Orders or a departure from long-established conventions. You asked him to place in the Library a note of any such view and you undertook to make the House aware if he did so.

I am today exercising the opportunity to place on record my view that the decision to allow an Official Opposition spokesperson to speak and to move an amendment before a Government minister in response to an SNP spokesperson moving their Opposition day motion represents a departure from the long-established convention for dealing with such amendments on Opposition days, governed by Standing Order No. 31. Where an orderly Government amendment to leave out some words of the motion and insert others is tabled and selected, the expectation is that such an amendment is then moved by the minister in the second speech of the debate and, once the amendment has been moved, the Standing Order provides that the first question considered by the House at the end of the debate must be on the text of the original motion. If that is negatively, the question is put on the Government's amendment. When introducing the proposal in 1979 the Leader of the House said the arrangements were "so that a vote could take place on the Opposition's own motion" (Hansard 31 October 1979 vol 972).

The Clerk of the House has objected to what Hoyle has done, which is heavily biased in Labour's interests.

So, why has he done that. My old university newspaper co-editor, Jon Craig, now at Sky News, has this to suggest:



Nick Watt of Newsnight confirms the view:



Labour blackmailed Hoyle and he caved in.

None of this says anything any good about Labour or the Speaker.

Meanwhile, the SNP's motion, which was the only one to really address the situation in Gaza, looks like it will never be voted on.

And we call this democracy.