

WEDNESDAY 13th APRIL 2011

The Speaker, Sir Allan Kemakeza took the chair at 9.55am.

Prayers.

ATTENDANCE

At prayers, all were present with the exception of the Minister for Finance & Treasury; Minister for Lands & Survey and the members for Temotu Pele, West Kwara'ae, Aoke/Langalanga.

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS AND OF REPORTS

- Report on the Motion to amend the Standing Orders of the National Parliament of the Solomon Islands to Establish Three Standing Select Committees and Their Respective Functions (*National Parliament Paper No. 13 of 2011*)
- Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development Annual Report 2010" (*National Parliament Paper No.14 of 2011*)
- Performance Assessment Framework (PAF) 2009 (*National Parliament Paper No. 15 of 2011*)
- Solomon Islands Standardised Tests of Achievement (SISTA) 2 – A report on the monitoring of literacy and numeracy achievements at the end of Year 6 in 2010 (*National Parliament Paper No. 16 of 2011*)
- Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Meteorology Strategic and Corporate Plan 2011 – 2014 (*National Parliament Paper No. 17 of 2011*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Questions No. 9 & 10 deferred

Police: progress of police houses

13. Mr. TAUSINGA (*MP West New Georgia/Vona Vona*): to the Minister for Police, National Security and Correctional Services: Can the Minister update the House on the progress of the Police Housing Scheme, in particular:-

- (a) How many houses have been built so far,
- (b) Which ranking officers would be entitled to be housed, and

(c) Is it going in accordance with approved funding?

Hon. TORA (*Minister for Police, National Security & Correctional Services*): I would like to thank those who have shown interest and have at some stage assisted in one way or the other in enabling the Police Housing project to eventuate.

I would like to inform this honourable House and for the sake of the questioner, the MP for Vona Vona/New Georgia that the Solomon Islands Government funded police houses, a total of 12 houses and have been built since 2009. In terms of the New Zealand and Australia Federal Police funded police houses, a total of 84 houses have been built so far since October 2010. Therefore, a total of 96 houses have been built as of year 2009 to date. Superintendent

Also for the interest of this honourable House, from 2010 to this year 2011, the following houses have been completed and officially commissioned. They are four houses in Gizo, five houses for the Marau Police station, two houses in Buala and one house is about 80 percent complete, probably in July this year.

For the New Zealand and Australian Federal funded police houses a total of 84 houses have been built so far and are as follows: Rove 4, Henderson 16, Tetere 11, Lata 17, Noro 12, Munda 6 and Gizo 18. All of the houses mentioned above have been under construction and a good number of houses have been completed. For the information of this honourable House, four houses at Rove have been fully completed and officially opened. The next sets of houses to be fully completed and ready to be officially opened are 17 houses for Lata and probably this will be in the first week of May.

For the Solomon Islands Government funded police houses, as you are aware, in the Development Budget of 2011 we have been allocated a sum of \$13.3million. This amount is to assist the Ministry facilitate the following projects and at least build 17 houses in the following locations: 4 Police houses to be built at Naha, which will cost \$2million, 3 Police houses at Gizo at a cost of \$2million, 1 Police house at Buala for \$800,000, 4 houses for correctional services at Naha, which will cost about \$2million, 2 houses at Tulagi, which will cost \$1million, 2 houses at Seghe for \$1million, and also houses in Auki and Marau.

Phase 2 which runs from June 2011 to June 2012, the Australian Federal Police will be funding 50 more houses and these houses will be built in these locations:

- Malaita Province – 26 houses, of which 20 will be built in Auki, 3 will be built in Atoifi, and another 3 in other stations.
- Makira & Ulawa Province – Kira Kira Police station will have 14 houses. These will replace the current very old houses.
- Choiseul Province – 10 houses will be built at the new proposed site station in Taro.

The answer to part (b), as you would have noted these newly built houses are three bedroom houses and are of executive standards. Having said this, the allocation of officers to these houses really depends on the location of these houses and all police officers are entitled to a house.

The reason why we have an allocation system in place is because we because we do not have enough houses to accommodate all police officers. Basically, the police housing committee uses a simple system to allocate officers to available houses. For example, in Honiara, the

Committee will review the current allocation and the availability of the newly built houses. If an Inspector, for instance, occupies a two bedroom house which is for a Police Constable, that Inspector will be reallocated a new house and a Police Constable will then be allocated the two bedroom house.

For houses in the provinces, allocation of houses is based entirely on Provincial Police Commanders' recommendations. In fact in the provinces, a lot more officers with ranks below the inspectorate level are able to occupy one of these newly built houses compared to officers in Honiara.

To answer the question, all officers are entitled to a house. I only hope that one day we are able to build enough houses for every officer. The process of allocation of officers to these houses is Provincial Commanders do assessment of their housing needs and submit it to the Police Housing Committee. Recommendations from the Housing Committee are then approved by the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force Executive.

Factors that the Housing Committee also takes into account apart from the rank factor includes:-

- (a) Donors, Australia and New Zealand, request that families currently living in the single quarters at the rear of Rove will be considered as part of the process. The system is structured in a way that the houses are systematically allocated to officers. The process is there to allocate houses to police officers.

Mr SOGAVARE (*MP East Choiseul*): I want to take the opportunity to thank the New Zealand and Australian governments for actively involving in this program of building police houses. My supplementary question is, in terms of the Ministry's forward plan, how many houses altogether is the Ministry thinking of building for police officers of this program, because of the funding involved whether the commitment of New Zealand and the Australian government will still continue to be committed to any long term plan to build more houses for the Police?

Hon. Tora: As I have alluded to in my contribution to the debate of the 2011 Appropriation Bill 2011, this is an ongoing project, for instance, New Zealand has funded about 34 houses, which appears in the development budget. The Australian Federal Police funded houses according to the announcement it made in 2009 when it allocated AUD\$20million over a four-year period. This means it is going to build 200 houses and New Zealand will build 34. But for Solomon Islands Government funding of houses will continue until all police officers are housed because housing is very important.

Mr Sogavare: I thank the Minister for his response. One of the weaknesses in terms of aid funded projects is maintenance of the buildings. What is the Government's plan being put in place to ensure all infrastructures are maintained in the long run?

Hon. Tora: On the question of maintenance, Australia and New Zealand will only fund construction of new houses. This Government will therefore look at whether Australia can help to meet maintenance costs in say 15 to 20 years time or whether it will be entirely on the

government to meet the maintenance cost. In regards to SIG funded houses, it is the Government's responsibility to maintain the houses when the need arises.

Hon. SIKUA (*Leader of Opposition*): Is there any way whereby the Ministry can approach our two good donors to extend their assistance beyond the 200 houses funded by Australia and the 34 houses funded by New Zealand to go onto phase 2 or something like that?

Hon. Tora: As I have said earlier, it depends on the Government through my Ministry to talk again with the two donor partners to help us build more houses for our police officers.

Also, if you may allow me to respond again to part of the question raised by the Honourable Member for East Choiseul, yes, we are jointly working on an infrastructure development plan that will show the allocation of houses in the next 2-3 years time. In addition to that, the development plan will also be done for maintenance of the houses that are currently being built.

Mr TOZAKA (*MP North Vella Lavella*): Supplementary question to the Minister. Information has it that there are police officers who have already left the service that are still occupying police quarters because they have unfinished business with the Ministry. Can you confirm this, what action has been done on the matter or how are you addressing this?

Hon Tora: This is a long standing issue not only with the police but also the public service. But in the case of the police, I have assigned the housing committee to audit all the houses, to carry out auditing to see whether officers that have already left the service through resignation or retirement are still occupying police quarters. I believe some officers are still occupying police quarters and so it is a matter I see as very urgent for the housing committee to deal with.

Mr MANENIARU (*MP West Are Are*): I understand there is a very active recruitment program for young men and women in the Force. In terms of the housing situation in the Police Force, does it comfortably accommodate these young men and women by providing them a place to stay or would they also be moved into these new houses as they are also police officers or are they left to still share with relatives?

Hon Tora: I have already mentioned in my previous answers that housing is an ongoing issue and we will try as much as possible to build more houses to house all police officers.

What the MP has raised is true in that some female officers are residing with relatives and some are trying their best to rent houses outside, which I see as not right by accommodating officers outside.

Mr Speaker, in the past, as you are aware yourself, there are police barracks mainly for male police officers and I can still remember we have one house that accommodated single female officers. But today, information has reached me concerning this matter that this is no longer the case. Yes, we will try as much as possible to build houses to house all police officers.

Hon Sikua: I heard that there are some problems emerging on the allocation of houses, as to who is to move into those new houses. Is the Minister aware of this problem in that those who should not have moved in are the first to move into those houses? Some moved out of the old houses and somebody moved into those houses, and the person who moved into the new houses does not know where else he is going to move to. Those are the problems I am hearing. If that is indeed a problem then what is the Minister and the Ministry are planning to do to ensure such confusion does not happen?

Hon Tora: Yes, I am aware of that situation and as I said I have assigned the housing committee chaired by my Permanent Secretary to look into this problem. As you know when new houses are built people often seem to compete for it, but we do not want to see that happen. We want them to follow the system that is in place in terms of allocation of houses.

For the information of this honourable House, those new built houses were provided with manuals for the occupants. The occupants are required to know and abide by the rules because they need to look after the houses well, may be treating them like their own children. Because sometimes our attitude is that we think the properties belong to the government and so we do not care about them. The manual will guide occupants to ensure they take care of government properties because donors that assisted us in building these houses are using their taxpayers' money, and so we must take care of them.

Mr Tausinga: I thank the Minister for Police and National Security for those information; that is very informative.

Police: RSIP services

14. **Mr SILAS TAUSINGA** (*MP West New Georgia/Vona Vona*) to the Minister for Police, National Security and Correctional Services: Can the Minister inform the honourable House of the followings:

- (a) Whether the Government is going to localize the position of the Commissioner of Police of the Solomon Islands Police Force?
- (b) Update any training being undertaken to regain public confidence and trust in the Police Force,
- (c) Since RAMSI's arrival, how many new local police officers have been recruited into the Police Force to date, and is this exercise going to continue?
- (d) Are there provisions in the budget for this exercise?

Hon. TORA (*Minister for Police & National Security*): For the information of this House, the Government has made a position on this, and so I will not pre-empt the outcome of the process of appointing a new commissioner of police. I can, however, confirm to this honourable House that the post of the Commissioner of Police will be advertised soon and will do so locally, regionally and internationally. It will be opened for all interested and able applicants to apply.

Mr. Tausinga: I just want to ask the Minister if he can answer the other parts of the question in (a), (b), (c) and (d).

Hon. Tora: On question (b), I would like to inform the House that since 2006, the RSIPF has undertaken a number of training programs to assist police officers in their respective units. Some of these trainings include, first, a leadership development program through the Australian Institute of Police Management, which is a management training program focusing on management and leadership qualities in the Police Force with the aim of training every member of the RSIPF. The second is the Rapid Response Team training program designed to enable the Police Rapid Response Unit to respond to riots and other similar uprisings or emergencies. The post conflict environment saw the need to revitalize and improve the management and leadership for our officers in the Force.

The RAMSI intervention also provided on-the-job training and exchange of skills and knowhow in certain divisions of the RSIPF. The popular training program to date is the leadership development program that is basically tailored to address integrity, leadership and management issues to better officers' performances, behaviours and standards of conduct in their place of work. About 283 members of the RSIPF have participated in this program.

The question of regaining public confidence, public trust is a really important one but is also a hard one to answer. It is, however, measured by the efficient and timely response capability of the Police Force when responding and attending to public complaints and how reported cases are dealt with by police officers.

I still believe that with the continuation of the above trainings in the coming years ahead, the general public will gradually accept and begin to trust and have confidence in our Police Force. It will take time but it will be realized eventually.

On part (c), since RAMSI arrived in the country in 2003, there were 14 recruit courses conducted by the Police Academy with a total number of 379 officers trained commencing in 2004.

The training of recruits in the Police Force is an ongoing programme and will continue for the rest of this year. On the second part of the question, this recruitment exercise is ongoing exercise done every year.

On part (d), yes, there is a provision in the 2011 budget to cater for the recruitment exercise under Head 283 - learning and development under line tem 0163-4001 – Training General, which we have allocated to some of \$585,000 allocated for 2011.

Mr TOZAKA (MP North Vella Lavella): There is one best training course for leaders of the Police Force, which is a leadership course in the United Kingdom (UK) where senior officers are sent there on an annual basis under the UK Training Programme, the product of which is your good self, Mr Speaker, you have attended this course and so as the Minister himself. This is a very good course. I just want to ask if this training programme with the United Kingdom still continues and if it does not, can the Minister try to continue with this very good training.

Hon. Tora: Mr Speaker, you yourself was once a police officer, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Deputy Prime Minister, as well as myself, we are all former police officers.

I think that is a very important comment made by my colleague. After this country gained independence from Britain in 1978, the training that is normally given to the Police started to diminish because we become dependent on our neighbours Australia, New Zealand and other regions like Papua New Guinea and Fiji. But I would like to assure this House that my Ministry will try and look into taking up this training again so that we can send senior officers to England for further training on management.

Mr SOGAVARE (*East Choiseul*): One issue that is left suspended because we did not pursue the implementation of the recommendations of the Foreign Relations Committee is the willingness of countries in Asia to be involved in RAMSI, in particular on the law and order sector, especially the training of police officers on the areas of Rapid Response Unit and the Close Protection group. What is the position of the government now on the interest of Asian countries who are interested to assist our officers to train in their countries?

Hon Tora: It depends on the government through recommendation from the ministry responsible. Of course, I think it is very important to look at sending our officers, especially those units to be trained in countries in Asia. It is important that we look at Asian countries as well, but again as I said it all depends on the government to take this on board.

Mr Tausinga: I would like to thank the honourable Minister for very fulfilling and informative answers.

Improvement of the water supply system

21. Mr PACHA (*MP South Guadalcanal*) to the Minister for Mines, Energy & Rural Electrification: Can the Minister explain the Government's plans to improve the water supply system in Honiara?

Hon KEMAKEZA (*Minister for Mines, Energy & Rural Electrification*): Since the establishment of SIWA as an authority or statutory body from 1991 to 1993, successive governments and SIWA boards of directors have not been able to adequately resolve the growing demand for water supply in Honiara, let alone the respective provincial centres.

Today the problem has gone from bad to worse because of aging infrastructures such as pipelines, reservoirs and electrical pumps and, therefore, the need to replace the system is quite imminent and also urgent. Fortunately, the Japanese Government has recognized the need to improve the water supply system in Honiara and Auki in Malaita Province and has agreed to provide funds over a period of three years from its annual grant aid program.

In 2009, the Solomon Islands government and the Japanese government signed an understanding to address the water supply problem. The Japanese government agreed to provide approximately SBD\$151.3million, and a contribution of the Solomon Islands government of SBD\$23.9million. This project is expected to start in mid or late 2011, which is this year, depending on the completion of certain commitments by the Solomon Islands government.

These commitments include improvement to road access, acquisition of original customary land for the boreholes, removal of existing water pipelines in existing reservoir sites, laying of electric cables to new facilities, levelling of construction sites and procurement and installation of distribution pipelines, service of running pipes to respective customers.

Last year the Central Tender Board awarded a contract to the Red Devil Transport Limited signed on 24th November 2010. And if the weather permits and all SIG obligations are completed, especially by July, August or September of this year 2011, the Japanese annual grant aid project would start. My Ministry has already committed \$7million for the various preparations, and if you look at the 2011 Appropriation Bill, a further \$8 million is expected to be spent each year. This is a three year project and we anticipate supply of adequate water supply to all our people and the good residents of the Honiara Township by 2013.

Hon. SIKUA (*Leader of Opposition*): How many boreholes in total, how many are within the town boundary and how many are outside of the town boundary, if the Minister could inform the House?

Hon. Kemakeza: As the question is quite technical, I would have to extract the quantity and the requirements and will put that to his pigeonhole as well as for the other 49 members of Parliament.

Mr TOZAKA (*MP North Vella Lavella*): One problem the Minister told us about is the electrical pump. How many pumps are involved here and what is wrong with them? Can it be changed to manual because it is electrical? Can we get a manual one because the breakdown of the pumps seems to occur nearly all the time?

Hon. Kemakeza: That suggestion is quite genuine and could be considered but that would be entirely dependent upon the procurement of the specific project that has already been approved for one of our local companies to undertake.

Mr Pacha: I would like to thank the Minister for answering the questions.

Illegal connection of water

22. Mr. PACHA (*MP South Guadalcanal*) to the Minister for Mines, Energy & Rural Electrification: Is the Minister aware that water is being illegally connected to many houses in Honiara and SIWA workers are allegedly involved in this practice?

Hon KEMAKEZA (*Minister for Mines, Energy & Rural Electrification*): As the Minister responsible I have not been made aware of water being illegally connected to many houses in Honiara involving SIWA workers. This is because SIWA Board has not made any report to my office on SIWA operations as required by sections 14 and 15 of the State Owned Enterprises Act 2007. If there is illegal involvement of SIWA workers as alleged, then it is a matter for the board, the SIWA management and, of course, the responsible ministry to deal with accordingly.

Mr Pacha: I think it would be unfair to ask further supplementary question since the Minister is not aware of this problem. I thank him for his response.

Mr Speaker: That concludes question time.

MOTIONS

Sine Die Motion

Mr Speaker: Honourable Members, yesterday the Prime Minister moved that at the adjournment of Parliament on Wednesday 13th April 2011 the present meeting shall be concluded and Parliament shall then stand adjourned sine die.

Honourable Members, debate on the motion resumes and concludes today. This is the only opportunity for Members to contribute to this broad ranging debate and I encourage Members to make full use of this chance. May I also kindly remind Members to be mindful of time as we only have today and all 50 members may want to speak so opportunity must be given to everyone to do so. The floor is now open for debate”.

Hon. AGOVAKA (*Minister for Foreign Affairs & External Trade*): I would like to, perhaps not only inform the House but inform the public as well of some of the things that have been going on since taking office as Minister of Foreign Affairs and External Trade.

Since taking office some eight to nine months ago, I have been virtually living in my suitcase; I have been travelling around attending seminars and conferences around the world. When I got into the office I found that our external trade has not been up to the pace with what is happening around the world and what is happening within the country in terms of trying to develop our economic reforms.

Currently, I have in place a trade officer who is assisting me to facilitate most of the trade meetings and assist Solomon Islands in its Pacer Plus negotiation, as well as the economic partnership agreement with the European Union. That will assist us throughout the year and hopefully by the end of the year we will be able to sign an interim EPA (economic partnership agreement) with the European Union or a comprehensive EPA with the European Union.

In terms of other negotiations on trade on Pacer Plus, there is a meeting in Tonga scheduled next month of which Solomon Islands is the lead spokesperson, and the person speaking to you now, the Foreign Minister will be chairing that meeting. I know that negotiations with Australia will be hard as I know how it thinks and how it will play its part, and so representing the Pacific Island countries as the lead spokesman will be a challenge indeed, a serious challenge for this matter.

In regards to our embassies, I thank the Cabinet for allowing me to set up an embassy in Cuba and one in Geneva. We will be setting an office in Geneva at the end of April or early May. I am looking for somebody to man the office in Geneva, to look after the WTO and all the other United Nations agencies, including WHO, ILO, ITU, WIPO and the rest of the United Nations agencies in Geneva.

The office in Cuba will be manned by an officer from the Ministry, who is a charge de affair and he will be responsible, not only for diplomacy and diplomatic relationships with the Caribbean but we would like to expand this to the South Americans, the Central Americans and the Latin Americans in general.

Secondly, it is to look after the welfare of students who are studying medicines in Cuba. As you know, we have 74 students, one student was recalled because of illness and at present we have 74 students studying there. This year we have another additional 10 students going there. In fact there are 20 scholarships and I was hoping to split those 20 scholarships into 10 for medicine and 10 for civil engineering. I think my office has now received applications from the Ministry of Health and we will be looking at that for our students to study in Cuba.

Also, this year we have made some bilateral agreements with India and we have five more new scholarships, and so we have a total of 10 scholarships in India to be funded by India Government, a fully funded scholarships in institutions and universities in India. My colleague, Minister of Education will be submitting formalities to the Ministry of Education to fund students or submit advertisements for students to apply for scholarships in India. These are some of the bilateral we have with India. We also have on-going bilateral arrangements with Morocco and we are interested in submitting proposal for training in the tourism sector. These are some of the trainings we have around the world.

In terms of how the Ministry is looking after its embassies, now with the completion of our embassy in PNG and the Fijian Government has given us a piece of land in Suva, which the Prime Minister alluded to yesterday of about 1.7 acres which will be used to build our new chancery in Suva as well as accommodation for officers who will be manning the embassy in Suva.

As you know, Solomon Islands is a member to a lot of agencies around the world, in particular the United Nations agencies and our membership is very important in that as part of the international community, issues like climate change, MDG and Solomon Islands being registered as a LDC is affecting us. These are issues our country has to work and try and improve on in particular the MDGs that we are having. Next month is the fourth UN LDC meeting in Istanbul where we will try to present our country paper on how we are achieving our Millennium Development Goals set by the United Nations. We have a target whereby in 2015 we will be able to, perhaps, if not achieve most of them or at least half of the MDG targets and goals that we have in particular education and health.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is very conscious about our relationship with Australia and New Zealand, in particular Australia. I would like to thank the honourable Member for North East Guadalcanal, the honourable Leader of Opposition for making that relationship intact and we would like to continue maintain that relationship with Australia and. The former Prime Minister and now the Foreign Minister, Kevin Rudd, and I are now working closely together trying to address some of the issues between our countries.

As you know, there is a gap between us and South East Asia. The Prime Minister has given me the mandate to establish a consular general somewhere in Indonesia or in Malaysia so that we can connect with South East Asia and also looking at the south/south corporations between South East Asia and Solomon Islands.

On our relationship with Fiji, as you know we continue to have dialogue with our friends and the Government of Fiji. We are looking at their strategy framework for change on how to assist them and also the roadmap for the 2014 democratic election of Fiji, which the Commodore and the Prime Minister has set for his country.

In terms of constituency, Central Guadalcanal has supported the country and as you know recently we have opened the Gold Ridge Mine and is now starting its operation and production of gold. This hopefully will assist this country in its economic standing and external revenue. Also another big project in my constituency is the Tina Hydro, which the World Bank is doing feasibility studies to set up the Tina Hydro and that will hopefully assist us with our power problems that we keep having here in this country.

In terms of social development on Central Guadalcanal, I think there are a number of projects that have been going on. We also have the logging company, Earth Movers are working up at the Tina area there. These are the three big projects that I have in my constituency; the gold mining and coming up is the hydro and also the logging which is our mainstay in the country at the moment. Another big project is coming up and that is going to be down at Foxwood, the Lungga area, which is also in my constituency and that is for the fishing loining factory that will be set up there.

All in all, I think Central Guadalcanal has contributed much to the economy of this country and I am pleased that our landowners are able to assist our country by giving their land willingly to some of the projects. And I call upon all the constituencies of this country to do likewise, to give your land to assist our country in developing our economy to help us get out of our LDC status.

With these few remarks, I would like to thank my people of Central Guadalcanal, in particular the chiefs, elders of tribes, church leaders, community leaders, youths, the women of Central Guadalcanal for their support during the election and now that I have won the election during my time and term as their member of Parliament for the second time for Central Guadalcanal. All the chiefs, thank you very much for your support and I will continue working with you all, and continue to support you in all our social and economic programs in Central Guadalcanal. With these few remarks thank you very much.

Hon. FIULAUA (*Minister for Infrastructure Development*): On behalf of my good people of Central Kwara'ae constituency, I would like to take this opportunity to contribute briefly to this important motion before us, the sine die motion for the current sitting of Parliament.

I would like to thank you, Mr Speaker, and your good staff of the National Parliament. I would like to thank the honourable Prime Minister and members of the NCRA government. I would also like to thank the Minister of Finance and Treasury and his good staff for the 2011 Budget estimates. I would like also to thank the Leader of Opposition and colleague opposition members working together in this meeting of Parliament.

I, on behalf of my Ministry would like to thank the NCRA government for the 2011 Budget estimates. My Ministry will continue to assist government in the delivery of services in the rural areas. My Ministry would also like to thank all donors in the transport sector for their help over the past years. My Ministry will work together with the NCRA government in its policy in the transport sector.

Before I resume my seat I would like to thank my people of Central Kwara'ae constituency for giving me the trust and confidence to represent them in this honourable House. With those I thank you and I support the motion. Thank you.

Hon SIKUA (*Leader of Opposition*): I have a twenty page speech, which I will have to cut out a lot of, but let me, Mr Speaker, thank you for giving this opportunity to speak on this Sine Die motion moved by the Prime Minister yesterday that at the adjournment of Parliament on Wednesday 13th April 2011, this present House will conclude and Parliament shall then stand adjourned sine die.

The first thing I want to mention is to express my disappointment at the time given to members of Parliament by the Government through the honourable Prime Minister for the honourable House to discuss this Sine Die motion. The least the Government can do is to afford members of Parliament two days, say until tomorrow for us to debate this motion. As you know, although Standing Order 8 is a bit silent on this, usually we take two to four days for our Sine Dine motion, as it is an opportunity where members of Parliament can express their views openly and clearly.

I do understand that probably the Government may know that I intend to move a motion of no confidence and so it short cuts this meeting to end today. I think the Government knows it has a solid number, I think at the moment it has 39, and so I do not know what the government is afraid of. I only have 11 on this side of the House, and I was thinking that the Government should afford members of Parliament more time rather than just today and I have got seven more minutes to go and so I better get on with what I want to say.

Mr Speaker: I will give you extra time.

Hon Sikua: Well, thank you indeed, Mr Speaker, you are very sincere and kind. But let me just make a comment first on the meeting that we have just had. I believe we have had a very good meeting in that Parliament debated and passed the 2011 Appropriation Bill 2011 and it also debated and passed the 2010 Supplementary Appropriation Bill 2011. Parliament also administered oaths for our new colleague members of Parliament for Mbaegu/Asifola and Shortlands, and on behalf of the Opposition group and indeed my good people of North East Guadalcanal, I take this opportunity to congratulate our two members of Parliament for their election success and wish them well in their endeavours as members of Parliament for their respective constituencies, as well as their ongoing roles as national leaders and members of this honourable House.

We have papers and reports presented by ministers and select committees, and I am thankful to the Prime Minister for giving us the opportunity to do obituary speeches for our late colleague, the late member for Mbaegu Asifola. We have deliberated on a number of motions, in particular the motions by the House to express sympathy to the people of Japan and Christchurch in New Zealand for the recent sufferings and destruction they suffered caused by the earthquake and tsunami. The other important motion that we deliberated on is the one that sought the increase of standing committees of the National Parliament of Solomon Islands to

establish three standing select committees and their respective functions as set out in the annexure that accompany the motion.

I think in debating that motion we have made a number of very useful suggestions which I hope the government would take them on. I just want to reiterate my point on the appointment of chairpersons and members to these boards, I hope that it would be fair by engaging members of both sides of the House in these committees, so that we can all help each other in the work that we do in Parliament.

Just back on the Budget, as I said it was a good meeting and one in which we have seen new members of Parliament in the NCRA Government who were appointed ministers defending their budgets for the first time, but I can tell you that I think all the new ministers have done very well and we need to applaud them for that, and so give them a hand.

(applause)

On the other hand we have some old ministers, some of whom have learned tricks of the trade so that some of the answers they have given to us might not be really true, but we take their word for it. And so I encourage all the ministers to go ahead now implementing the budget because we want to see things moving ahead. I remind ministers to take note of that; the key words are quality spending. With programs in the ministries, I am sure you will be vigilant in making sure that your ministries implement the budget in the manner stated in your work programs.

On our part, we will be watching every move that the ministries are making, and we will be vigilant in our role as the watchdog for the government.

There are issues in the budget that I want to speak on, but the important one that I want to raise to the Minister of Provincial government is this change that we have in allocating fixed services grants to provinces where we do not allocate, as was the practice before separately for road maintenance grants, education grants and medical grants but they were given the lump sum fixed services grant to the provinces and we expect them to allocate money for road, education, health and so forth. My experience in the last four years is not very good because the provinces themselves should be responsible for the feeder roads, but because they were lumped into one fixed grant, it was allocated to other things and they will not worry about the roads, and it would be members of Parliament who would be busy maintaining the feeder roads.

I am happy that in the recent seven months, the Ministry of Infrastructure Development came to fix our roads, and so I want to thank the Ministry of Infrastructure Development for that. There are hardly any funds given to our schools, which the province is the education authority responsible, and the same I would say for clinics in the provinces. I think in the next budget we have to give this a careful thought. That is my only concern on the Ministry of Provincial Government and Institutional Strengthening.

But in all, like I said we have had a very good meeting, it is a bit short and I hope that next time we have a meeting, the sine die motion is given a lot of time for us to talk on. I have a lot of things I wanted to say, but let me just say here that we as national leaders whether in government or the opposition have to speak the truth openly and clearly so that we reveal the

motives and reasons on what we are doing. As leaders we cannot conduct open and frank and fair discussions on government and on policies if we are not trusted. And so I want to urge our friends from the government side that we must not hide behind whispers and gossips when we deal with government and policies because this is most likely to be hiding something from our people and, of course, this leads to corrupt politics.

I encourage the Government to continue with the extensive work that it is going to do in the National Development Plan, and as I have mentioned on a number of occasions we are happy to be part of this discussion if and when the opportunity arises, and so I pledge and offer our services. As you know this side of the house has a lot of very experienced and capable leaders and we want the Government to take note of that because where services are needed we are very happy to help move things along for the benefit of the country and our people.

Talking about our country and people, on their behalf I want to thank donors for the support they continue to give on the budget and to thank you, Mr Speaker, for the manner in which you conducted this meeting. I should be very angry and sad at you for not allowing my motion of no confidence, but I am very mindful of Standing Order 38 where your ruling is final and so I respect that. But I thank you and I thank the Clerk and staff of the National Parliament for all their assistance and help given to us in this meeting. We also thank other people that have contributed one way or the other; our police for the security they provide and also thank our good people throughout the country. In the last seven months all sorts of political things have happened, but our people just got on with their lives, they are not very bothered about us, and that indicates maturity in our peoples thinking when they allow us to do what we do and they get on with their lives. That is a healthy thing about democracy.

Finally, I wish to extend my thanks to my good people of North East Guadalcanal for their understanding. Soon after elections I got involved with the petition case against me, and I am going back to court again on Monday to continue with my petition case, which I think will take another five months or so and this will take up my time. But I hope that as soon as I am finished with my case I hope to get back and see my people and continue with the good work we have been doing together.

With these remarks, I support the motion.

Hon LILO: Normally I do not often stand up early in the debate, but I wanted to go home this afternoon, and so with your permission I would like to take the floor at this stage so that I can be excused in the afternoon.

This is a customary motion that at the end of every meeting we are given the opportunity to evaluate the activities of Parliament during the course of that particular meeting. We have come to the end today of the second meeting of the Ninth Parliament, and I thought it has been a very good meeting. I agree with the Prime Minister that we should stand adjourned sine die today, and therefore I support that motion.

And in doing so, let me also join the Prime Minister and the Leader of Opposition who have spoken to thank all relevant authorities who have contributed to the success of this meeting. I would like to extend best wishes to his Excellency, staff of the Government House, your good self, Mr. Speaker, the Clerk and staff of the National Parliament, Ministers and Permanent Secretaries, officers of all our ministries. Of course, the opposition bench, the Leader of Opposition, unfortunately or quite fortunately maybe, we do not have a leader for the

Independent Group. But that does not mean that we should not extend wishes to members of the Independent group. They have also played a very important role during the short life of this Ninth Parliament so far, a very stable role in ensuring that we continue to enjoy a very interesting and a stable political development that we have today.

I have served in that position before, Mr Speaker, as you know very well. Since I joined Parliament in 2001, I was in that position for a full term of four years as leader of independent, sitting down there with the member for East Choiseul, the member for North New Georgia and other members who have not been able to make it back into this Parliament, and we have provided a very stable situation that has given the rights to you too, Mr Speaker, that you serve your four full term as prime minister of this country. That kind of development can also happen too if we are all committed to our responsibility in our roles as parliamentarians, in our role in the various positions that we hold in this House. And so on my behalf I extend best wishes to the independent group as well.

Let me also extend my thanks to our doctors and nurses who have been looking after our very sick people throughout the country. The health of our citizens and the health of our nation is their hands, and so we must continue to look after them. Give to our nurses and doctors the kind of support they need to look after the health of this country. Sometimes we think it is too expensive for us to buy good quality health. But I think this country needs that very much because the single and the most important asset of this country is its human resource. Productivity of our labour cannot be guaranteed if the health of the nation and health of our labour is not guaranteed. So we must give support to them as well.

To our teachers, the Leader of Opposition has made mention about the need for us to concentrate more on developing rural literacy. I think he has made that point very well. We must continue to look after them, and I would like to thank the work that our teachers, especially in the rural areas have continued to do in employing their labour to deliver the services in ensuring that education, human resources development of our people in the rural areas can continue. Let me extend my congratulations to them too.

Our people in the law and order sector; the police, prison services are continuing to do a very good job. Those who for sometime would have to be subjected to that kind of correctional services, and that their civil liberty has to be taken away and put into that kind of an environment, I think we need to congratulate them too, to continue try and correct our citizens, our inmates who now must find a place to rehabilitate themselves, correct them so that they become better citizens of our society. We need to recognize them too.

Our judiciary, we all know is continuing to receive the kind of commendation from not only us in here, but outside the region internationally for the way they have carried out that very impartial responsibility in their duties to deliver justice to our people. We need to congratulate them too.

With those, I think we have the right note now for us to stop and start to work. We must sine die today so that we can start to work. Forget about all the things that we have done, and I am so encouraged by the words of the Leader of the Opposition when he said "we must now work". On my behalf I would like to thank the Leader of the Opposition for accepting your decision, Sir, that he will not go any further to ask you about your decision for rejecting the application he has given to you for the sine die motion.

We have all avenues in the standing Order for us to exercise our rights and privileges. Friday last week was empty, we came into this House, there was no business and so we left. It would have been a very good opportune time for us to talk about such a motion. We allowed that opportunity to just slip passed our hands. I do not know where the elements of irresponsibility will lie on. I will leave it to the good judgment of this House to decide on that. But what an opportune time! If I were in that position I would have grabbed it and said 'now look, let us put a check on the government side so that we know whether or not they are doing things transparently, exercise good governance, whether they are, or they are not worthy to manage the state of affairs of this nation'. That would have been an opportune time. But that said, let me say this; not only theory but all of us understand out of our own practicality and the practical experiences that we have gone through that we need political stability for economic stability. If there is no stability, social stability that kind of stability cannot give rise to a good environment for economy, social harmony or something like that to go ahead. Let us stop some of these unnecessary political developments. Put our differences aside and let us make a difference by putting differences aside. I think that is what we need to do; put our differences aside and let us make a difference of what we can do better for this country. Simple as that! That is basically what we are asking everybody because there is no reason and I am sure that Renbel, East Choiseul, Leader of Opposition, everyone on that side would agree with me that there is no reason whatsoever for us to create instability. We are doing very well. You are doing very well as checks and balances mechanism of the executive, in this position as part of the legislature, and you have done it so well for the last seven months, you have done it so well. I must say that this government is committed to serious discipline, not austerity measures. We have committed to serious discipline to ensure that the policies we are doing must be sound, practical and that it must deliver on good outcomes. That, we have continued to have shown. I did not realize that you have given time to everyone because I came in very late, but I thought it has been a very good demonstration of a committed and a discipline group so far in managing this country and I believe we can have that done.

We must also look after our people in the public sector unions, and I was so surprised when I saw an article yesterday about the long service benefit. Let me just touch a little bit on that. This Government is committed to negotiate a good outcome on the long service benefit development of Solomon Islands. Somehow when I read the paper yesterday it becomes so personal that I do not know. It was so personal against the Minister of Finance and the Permanent Secretary of Finance who were just trying to achieve a good outcome for our public officers. When I see comments on the paper, they sound very similar to comments that came out of this Chamber, and so let me throw it back into this Chamber so that we think about it and then let it out.

We are trying to make a difference for our public officers. We know that it has been there for so long and we are trying to make improvement on it. The offer that we have given and the discussions we have conducted with the Public Sector union have been so cordial, and when we came out of the meeting everybody agreed to do it. But as soon as they went outside, a different story was made; no, we do not agree. But we are still working with them right now, and I have just got a letter from the Union to show that we need to do something.

The offer we have given was instead of 10 years, extend it to 15 years, give 36 pay periods to them and also enjoy \$1,000 every year. So say for instance if somebody works for 20 years, he will get \$20,000 and then another 36 pay periods. Some wanted that it should not be taxable. Let me say this because that came on the article that it must not be taxed. An income that we earn must be subject to tax because if we are going to do that then the same would apply to other unions of the private sector and so forth which would not make any sense.

We are still working through with this. And I really commend the executives of the Unions who have done so well so far in two of their meetings and I am sure that we will reach a compromise on this. But I think we need to help our unions, the Public Sector Unions. We must give more time this year and this Government will spend a little bit of time with the Minister of Public Service so that we talk this thing through with our Public Sector Unions.

You would note that two days ago, we have just encouraged the revitalization of one very important investment arm of Solomon Islands, which is the Kolombangara Forest Products Limited. This investment has been around there for the last 20 years and in spite of all the ups and downs, the thick and thins we have gone through, the KFPL remains. I am not saying this because it is in my constituency then I might appear very parochial here. But let me just say that we have continued to deliver that particular investment to this country. That is our gift, the gift of my constituency to the people of Solomon Islands. And when somebody writes on the paper saying the Minister of Finance is so and so, I just wanted to know that guy because he is hiding under a penname, to come out and tell us who he is. I have signed the KFPL three times in 1992, 2006 and this year, with no assistance from the government, but it still continues, our people are still working there. That is the kind of private sector investment we need to encourage so that the government can increase the taxable capacity of this country, pay more to the government and pay our people. But when people talk like that I feel very bad and embarrassed too. I am standing like this now but I am embarrassed because the newspaper is telling something different. I will leave it like that because I am not a person who supports himself on personal attacks in the public media. I have never done that. So let me just put it like that. For the other issues mentioned in the paper, I will not respond to them. But I will allow him to research so that he ascertains whether or not I am wrong. I will leave it like that.

The donor support that we have in this responsibility it would be remiss of me not to mention that. The Leader of the Opposition is going outside, but in 2008 we started off this whole program of core economic working group consultative meetings we had with all the donors, and it came out very well. And Solomon Islands has a lead experience on this particular relationship that we have with our donor partners. We have speeded it up, fast track our cooperation with the other various donors and have established a very stable situation for this country moving forward.

Let me thank this opportunity to congratulate all partners in that core economic working group. That is the message now being preached throughout the Pacific region to show an example of the kind cooperation that the government and donors would be able to do. The progress that was done so far, centrality to that is the core economic working group. I would like to give special commendation, support and congratulation to the donor partners, which have been so actively involved in that particular process. I therefore believe we now have the right environment in moving forward. That is the message I would like to leave in this motion.

Of course, against the backdrop of so many things that have happened, so many criticisms that we been throwing inside this House, hot air, good strong thinking and ideas to try and develop Solomon Islands, all of these are very good. But let us capture one thing that we have right now; the environment is just right for us, the opportunity for us to capture all the good things that are happening now is right now. So why should we think about creating so many instability.

I want Her Majesty's the Opposition of Solomon Islands, they are all my friends....

Mr Gukuna: (*interjection*): What do you want from us?

Hon. Lilo: I want them not to be as what they are, but I want them to be loyal and dedicated opposition members so that they will continue to show a responsible check and balance on the government. That is what we are asking from them. When you make the check to an extent that you wanted to uproot somebody then that is no longer a check. That is a complete deconstruction of the whole processes and system that are already very sound, good and established. As soon as you start doing that, it is no longer constructive, it is no longer a constructive responsibility but you have ended up engaging yourself in destructive deconstruction actions. When you start to do that then you become an agent of a very questionable exercise. But for the time being I think we should commend and complement them and I think that is the consolation we can stand adjourn sine die in this particular meeting to go with. And that is a good understanding that they have shown to allow the NCRA government; the government of the people of this country, to continue manage the affairs of the country.

With that I would like to extend my special thanks and gratitude to the people of my own constituency, the people of Gizo/Kolombangara who continue to have confidence and support me. And I will continue to thank them in any sine die motion. The winning margin that they have always given me to return to this House does not fall below one thousand, so keep holding onto that. And I would like to thank the honourable Deputy Prime Minister for coming up with the program on electoral reform so that we shift from past-the-post to preferential voting system. When I say that, some in here are already nervous because if we go by that system some us in here will not retain our seats. No, that is not what I am saying. We have a good time now to come up with a proper reform to the electoral system so that we can have a more preferred and a more consolidated mandate that is more mature. That is the most important thing, and we need to have that so that we can have a better electoral system that can give the mandate, unquestionable mandate to us to stand in this House.

Sometimes I feel bad when I hear people continue to criticize people who have absolute mandate from their people. If you would have known the mandate they have, they have a very good winning mandate, but some of us still question them like 'you should not be in this House', trying to destroy them personally and their responsibility to deliver that leadership to their own people. Let us put a stop to that, we must stop it.

Some of us only win by 20 or 70 votes and then we turn around and criticize others that they are not fit to be in this House. But if you look at the mandate given by their people he has

the overwhelming majority support. What mandate have we got to say to them that they are not fit to be in this House, and continue to criticize others?

I want to say that we must stop this kind of attitude; so personalizing, a kind of judgmental attitude when one says 'you are better than me' or that 'person is not better than this person' and so on. Stop those! If we do that we will continue to breed instability and hatred amongst ourselves in this House. Do not look down on somebody; let us respect each other that the mandates we have in coming to this House are the same. Once you start to say 'you are not fit, this person is fit or that person is this and that person is that', goodness me that person will turn around and say to you it is not out of qualification that we come into this House. Remember what the President of the autonomous government of Bougainville said. He said one occupation that does not have qualification is become a politician. That is what his Excellency President John Momis said. That old man is like my mentor, I know this old man very well, but that is what he said in this very Chamber. What is important is the mandate that our people have given to you and I so let us not try to question each other of the mandate given to us. But I think so far we have done very well in this House. We have shown responsibility and I think we will learn from it and we will move forward because I have full confidence in all of us in this House.

Sir, if there is anything I may have said against anyone in this House that might not be comfortable to him, my apologies for saying that. But I enjoyed a lot the debates of the second meeting of this Ninth Parliament. I said during the budget debate that if there is any wisdom that comes out of it, from me, myself I owe it to the whole lot of you and I continue to earn that kind of wisdom out of the debates that come out of you all in this House. Any mistakes I may have said is better left to me alone. That is of my own. With those, I congratulate you and I thank all members in this House at this meeting. I support the motion.

Mr TOME: Thank you very much for giving me the floor to address this honourable House for the first time since being elected. Please allow me at the outset to take this opportunity pay tribute and salute my predecessor, the late honourable Toswell Kaua who has distinctly serve the people of Mbaegu/Asifola during his tenure as a member of this chamber. It is also an honour for me to salute and thank former parliamentary members of Mbaegu/Asifola for their contribution to the development of our constituency and the country as a whole.

Let me also take this humble opportunity to thank the chiefs, village elders, church leaders, youth groups, women and women associations and the people of Mbaegu/Asifola for having confidence in me through the recent democratic process to represent them in this honourable chamber. It is indeed an honour for me to take up this challenge to represent my people to the best of my ability and I can assure them that I will do my best to ensure we strive together to build our constituency to the benefit of our people in the coming years. Therefore, I call on my people to be an organised, united, responsible, caring and sharing people.

As you are aware, Mbaegu/Asifola constitutes of two groups of people. One is the coastal people who live mainly on the beautiful artificial islands and second are the inland people. Today, this constituency is at the crossroad for change. The people have mandated me to represent them in this honourable house. The Mbaegu/Asifola people are enthusiastic to participate in nation building of this country. The overwhelming impression of our reality is

that Solomon Islands can succeed with great wisdom. We can contribute to nation building by providing communities to look after themselves in terms of our development aspirations. I say this with the view that the people of Mbaegu/ Asifola are resilient people, people who toiled their land and harvest their resources for many years for their livelihood and yet, there is little opportunity for my people to utilise in order to progress the development of our constituency and participation in nation building.

As I have mentioned earlier, Mbaegu/ Asifola comprises of two distinct people, one from the coastal and the other the inland people. Today the lives of my coastal people of Asifola who mainly live on artificial islands are at risk and are threatened by the sea level rise. The impact of climate change is real and the recent revelation by my coastal people speaks volumes of the threat they are faced with.

The anticipated impact of climate change on the development progress of my people of Mbaegu/Asifola is threatening and hence I call on responsible authorities, including the international community, donors, non government organizations, non state actors and other relevant institutions to address this pertinent issue collectively. We must ensure that resources that are allocated to address climate change adaptation and mitigation priorities in Solomon Island are adequately and equally distributed to the people. I am pleased to say that Solomon Islands is actively implementing climate change programs in the country and the matter is the quicker we address this issue the better it is for us in the future.

As I have alluded to earlier, the people of Mbaegu /Asifola are enthusiastic people who are very much willing to participate in the development process of this nation. We are very much encouraged to see the government's policy on growth centres and the policy to empower rural people to be participants in the economic activities of this country. We are also encouraged by the proactive policies that have been put in place and resource allocations to implement such economic activities. My people have not had such opportunities in the past to entice them in such activities, and in this regard the Mbaegu/ Asifola people will be embarking on a framework that will ensure inclusive participation in these economic activities.

Furthermore, empowering people of Mbaegu/ Asifola is vital in this process and the idea to establish information hubs within the country and my constituency for that matter is very important, so that my people are aware of the activities of development.

The issue of land reform is an important undertaking in the development process of this nation. As you are aware, land can be a complicated issue in the Melanesian society, hence I am pleased to know the current government's policy in implementing a land reform program to ensure resource owners are well informed and land systems are well recorded for relevant developments to take place. The people of Mbaegu/Asifola stand ready to participate in these reform agendas.

The building of infrastructures in the rural areas must be encouraged to entice economic development. In any country, necessarily and relevant infrastructures must be established to create opportunities for people to participate in economic activities. Mbaegu/Asifola calls on the government and our development partners to realize the importance of these infrastructures as this is the only way people can participate and contribute to the economic activities of this nation.

The idea of an integrated rural development program must be applauded. The people of Mbaegu/Asifola very much support integrated rural development programs, which provide greater emphasis on people centred development. That being said, I am very concerned that the people of Mbaegu/Asifola have not enjoyed their rights for proper water supply and sanitation for many years.

The experience of not having quality water and proper sanitation is very sobering. For many years my people including women and children have to walk great distances to fetch water and our people are suffering from water related diseases. The recent revelation of contaminated water in Honiara is worrying and threatening the lives of our people. We are very much concerned about our food security and it is time we must act to ensure we maintain a high standard of health for our people.

Water and sanitation are basic human rights for all people, as shown in the United Nations Water and Sanitation resolutions. Hence we have the huge obligation on our part to deliver to our people in terms of quality water and proper sanitation.

The implementation of the Millennium Development Goals calls for greater action by us. I am saying this because people of Mbaegu/Asifola have not received quality programs in addressing the Millennium Development Goals. My people were not even given the opportunity to learn about the Millennium Development Goals and how they could actively participate in addressing the issues. I say this because a lot of reports have portrayed Solomon Islands as lacking progress in various sectors of the Millennium Development Goals. Time is catching on us, and we only have about four years to the deadline in 2015. It is in this regard that my people will be embarking in a proactive program to ensure my people understand the Millennium Development Goals and how best they can contribute in achieving the desired goals.

While on that subject matter, I think education and health are fundamental drivers of economic development. I believe that we need a proactive system in these two sectors to demonstrate our commitment and work towards achieving the targets we wanted. It is evident from reports that there is a lack of Millennium Development Goal progress at rural levels, which prompt the need for donors and government to remain committed in capacity building of rural people. Investing in local capacity must be prioritized in order for the people to work together to achieve these goals.

The people of Mbaegu/Asifola stand ready to work with relevant institutions within the country and donors to implement the policies relating to the MDG before the due date in 2015. Furthermore, people are important resources and it is vitally important that we work together to empower them in their various capacities to develop our rural societies. Such efforts, however, demand a radical overhaul of ways in which we currently we develop our nation. This is not just about capacitating people rather it is about changing the mindset of our people. It is about bringing together a range of diverse actors together in our development process that leads to better services, driving economic sectors and thus a better quality of life for all people in our rural areas.

It is an important undertaking to create a situation whereby people of this nation are drivers of their own development aspirations for respective constituencies to identify areas where all people can drive their own development aspirations with the help of the Government

and donors. I am very much encouraged that this current government's policy is gearing us towards that self sustainable society whereby people are participants in the development process.

The people of Mbaegu/Asifola are also committed to the preservation of our traditional values and traditions. We see the role of our traditional chiefs as important in decision making, conflict resolution and development process. One of the important tasks ahead of us is the revival of our Mbaegu/Asifola House of Chiefs. Our generation today must recognize the importance of our traditional values, and it is in this regard that I call on us leaders to make every attempt to preserve the importance of our traditional systems.

The value of our political stability must not be overlooked. I am a strong believer that to achieve these objectives, we must have a strong, sound, responsible and stable political system that collectively embraces the development aspirations of our people. We must join hands together irrespective of our political beliefs to drive this nation forward. We must be owners and drivers of our development process and nobody else will create the benefit to our nation, but it is only us. Only Solomon Islands can forge the destiny of our people with, of course, the assistance of our development partners. Therefore, we must work together to focus nationalistically and work towards a common goal in order to make a difference to the lives of our people and our generations to come.

Mr Speaker, let me conclude by thanking you once again and your good staff for giving me this opportunity to deliver my first speech in this honourable Chamber. It is also indeed my humble respect to be sitting amongst the high and respected leaders of this nation. I thank my good people of Mbaegu/Asifola for their support to me and I can assure them that we will strive together to build a constituency that will benefit our people and our children. May God bless Solomon Islands and our people from shore to shore. With these few remarks I support the motion.

Sitting suspended from 12pm to 1.30pm

Parliament resumes...

Mr TAUSINGA (MP North New Georgia): *(the first part of the speech was not recorded)* .. parliamentary domain. I promise that I will work by your side and together serve the people of our land.

Secondly, Mr Speaker, I would like to offer you my sincere gratitude for the shepherd manner in which you ably managed and conduct the meeting and discussions in the Chamber. Thank you for your understanding. Also, I would like to extend my appreciation to the Clerk of the National Parliament, her subordinates and all the Hansard personnel, the Secretariat and auxiliary staffs for making the meeting successful. It is not a secret that in meeting periods like the one now ending, much is demanded from you. But the sleepless nights you have endured for the past three weeks must now come to an end. Thank you very much indeed.

The honourable Prime Minister and your deputy, the Cabinet Ministers and the entire government machineries, the Chief Executive officers and public servants, your combined

efforts indeed have made it possible for Parliament to convene and to quickly dispose of the most important subject of the Parliament meeting, the 2011 Appropriation Bill 2011.

Our critical observations on the subject have tested the patience and forbearance of the Government and in particular the honourable Minister of Finance and Treasury. Nevertheless, the consolation, however, is that the 2011 Appropriation Bill 2011 has went through the parliamentary process and is now passed. The various expenditures outlined in the Bill are now authorized to be expended.

The Leader of the Opposition and the Office of the Opposition must also be thanked for the role they play. Alerting the government on inadequacies or on issues of importance to the country is the duty you must actively undertake. I thank you for their understanding and their participation in the governance of the country. I must also thank our traditional development partners namely, the European Union, Australia, New Zealand, the Republic of China, the Pacific Island Communities and other international entities for their budgetary support on areas identified and which the country lack financial resources on. Thank you for your understanding and support. To the private sector, thank you for your support and understanding as well.

I must also record my appreciation to the citizens of the country, who themselves are resource owners for allowing your resources to be exploited for the good of the country, Solomon Islands. Solomon Islands development and advancement in social, political and economical is a task all citizens must bear. We are the Solomon Islands and Solomon Islands are all of us, its citizens and thus it is important to appreciate that what we have and what we allow to be developed is what makes the country strong and sustainable. Thank you for your support and understanding.

Having unreservedly offered my words of gratitude to the various sectors of the country, I would now like to briefly observe a few important issues that have emerged in the past weeks. As I have alluded to earlier, we have had a productive meeting in the sense that we have passed the single most important consideration of Parliament, the 2011 Appropriation Bill, 2011. This Bill and its passage in the House gave the government the authority to expend and service the people and as well as to use relevant allocated financial resources on investment that will see increase revenue plan for the state. It needs no reminding that the government has less than a year ahead of it, and thus it is important to quickly make choices on the priorities that it has to bank on and make beneficial impact on the lives and living of the people.

The government has my trust that it can make a difference. And I am not being sinister here but merely to recognize the audacity of the credible and responsible budget that was so emphasised by the government. And despite my insistence that the budget was ordinary and there is no major shift in the development trends since independence, although there is no major policy that contrasted other past regimes, the response on the government believed otherwise. And because of my observations on the ordinary nature of the budget was detested by the government, I can only caution again not to be excited and not to be over confident. The phase of implementation is usually the measure of success, and the quality services the government provides for the people are the comfort of families in the country.

I must have hurt some feelings on my analysis of the budget and to have suggested that the budget was ordinary despite the attempt to contrast it from the previous budget that have

been presented in the House by past government regimes. The government was banking on its surplus nature and thus attempted to suggest that no budgets in the past equalled the surplus like what we have now. But budget surplus is mere bookkeeping and we can all write a budget. If we decide to have a surplus budget, of course, we can or as well a budget to the contrary.

Briefly I wish to make observations on some issues that are important and directly relate to the conduct of members in the Chamber. Therefore, my contribution to the debate was on the second reading of the budget purely on the ordinary nature of the budget and its usage to sustain and support government development and servicing plan of the people. I mean no sinister reasons to demean the government and in particular the Minister of Finance and Treasury, but merely to draw attention to the fact that surplus budget is no means of credibility nor is a measure of being responsible. The measure of a credible budget is the satisfaction that comforted the people from the quality services provided by the government or the agents of government. This is what I submitted in my debate. However, if I have hurt some feelings in my contribution then I must apologise.

It is important to recognize as well the role the government plays in both the economic and social development of the country, and thus the various plans and priorities the government has put in place are very important. It is on this recognition that I directed my observation on the need for the government to come down to the basics and start to identify the inadequacies that need our attention and actions. I mean there is no wrong in dreaming and trying to do big things, but similarly if we cannot attend and fix little things, how much more do we expect to fix big things.

This analysis was made in the light of the potential of the tourism industry in the country. This is in the assumption that there is more to it than the budget allocation that will directly support tourism propositions. The industry must be looked into in the light of supporting services, the basics that are needed to promote the potential of the industry and other industries as well. The basics: the need for consistent and adequate water supply throughout the country; the need to supply uninterrupted electricity; the need to provide cheaper and reliable transport both air and sea systems; the need to provide cheaper and reliable communications; the need to provide quality medical services; the need to provide decompression chambers for divers that enjoy the beauty of our underwater world and the list goes on.

As I said there is no wrong in planning big things, economic growth centres, etc, etc. But what is there for Gizo, a town that has poor water supply? What is there for Noro, a town that is experiencing the same problems? What about Munda, Seghe, Batuna, Yandina, Honiara, Tulagi, Auki, Lata and so on?

Try to assess these in light of basic services. Which of these towns enjoy the basic services? Will we be able to sustain the basic services at the new economic growth centres? The answer my friend is not blowing in the wind. The answer is in your hands. However, I have been reminded by the honourable for Mbaelelea about a biblical narrative and this is about Elijah and the woman whose son died and being kept in the house before burial. It is a situation when parents grieve for the loss of a child. Elijah knew what had befallen the mother yet he asked, "How are you?" Despite the fact that the loss in the family is still in the house, the mother responded with a good heart, 'all is well'. And so I said to my honourable Minister of

Finance and Treasury and the Government all is well, despite the many issues that we believe are inadequacies of the government. 'All is well'.

We have recently witnessed some unusual political behaviour amongst the representatives of the people lately, and one that comes to mind was the unusual switching of side by members of Parliament in order to change the government. While it is natural to change the government by way of numerical strength and in compliance with existing constitutional procedures, the manner in which we allow ourselves to switch from one side of the political camp to another is rather anaemic or a wrong way of doing things.

Who in his right mind would ever contemplate to seek assistance, "So help me God" time and time again in a short span of time. We have noted that there are members in this House who have crossed the floor more than two times and who have also taken the oath more than two times in a matter of one week or so. His Excellency must have wondered what on earth was happening, especially when he had to administer the oaths and affirmation to the same ministers two or three times in a week. His Excellency must have wondered whether everything is not abnormal or Her Majesty the Queen, of Solomon Islands must have wondered whether there is any credibility in her office in Solomon Islands.

The people of this country can become victims of our immaturity. We must do it differently in a manner that will not victimize the people. We must not allow ourselves to be unprincipled because unprincipled minds make unprincipled leaders or unprincipled government or parliament. And so the need to legislate against this practice is more important now than ever. I urge the government to bring on to this Parliament the Party Integrity Bill to help us behave like representatives and leaders of the people. After all, actions alluded to here are not only uncalled for but expensive to say the least. Despite of that, I would also reiterate all is well.

There will come a time that I will raise further issues of national importance and when the appropriate subject matter is put before Parliament. But as for the motion before the House, it is an appropriate opportunity to raise these issues. The motion is purely the termination of the current meeting until the next time.

In summation, I would like to finally thank the honourable members of Parliament for their friendship, their comradeship and understanding. I wish them farewell and happy reunion with their families and their constituencies. As we approach the Holy Easter, I would like to wish all colleagues and yourself, Mr Speaker, and all parliament officers, a happy Easter and may the good Lord grant you his unceasing blessings for his precious blood is an atonement to all who seek his love. I beg to support the motion.

Hon SIGOTO (*Minister for Health & Medical Services*): Firstly, I take this opportunity to sincerely thank the honourable Prime Minister for moving this motion, hence giving me an opportunity to comment on several important motions and bills brought before this honourable House during this second meeting of the Ninth Parliament.

I would like to begin by thanking the Minister for Finance and Treasury for bringing to Parliament the 2011 Appropriation Bill, 2011 and thank honourable members of this chamber for its successful passage. I sincerely thank all my colleagues for your support of the Bill.

Let me specifically thank honourable colleagues for their support to the Ministry that I am responsible for, which is the Ministry of Health and Medical Services. My Ministry has three components in the 2011 Appropriation Bill 2011 and they are Head 276, 376, and 476, which are the recurrent, budget support and the development budget. My Ministry is very thankful for a total of \$300million that has been appropriated by this honourable House that will be used to provide health care services as well as to promote and prevent diseases for the people of this nation.

I also would like to thank our development partners, especially those that are supporting my ministry for their contributions under the non appropriated funds, totalling \$225million that will go towards the provision and promotion of health in this country. My Ministry is grateful for all the financial support and is seriously putting in place measures to ensure that resources are efficiently and effectively delivered to the people throughout the nation. It is in its endeavour and seriousness to improve its capacity and capability, my Ministry has developed documents to assist us facilitate the above responsibility.

Firstly, we have developed the Ministry of Health Corporate Plan 2011–2015. We will also very shortly launch the National Health Strategic Plan 2011–2015 that will complement the Corporate Plan. My Ministry is also finalising our 2011 operational plan. This will guide us on priority programs and projects for this financial year. All our three plans are in line with NCRA's policy documents and the translation document. My Ministry is also developing clear indicators for all our objectives and goals so that this will be monitored very closely to ensure we achieve outputs and eventually outcomes.

The National Health Strategic Plan and the Ministry of Health Corporate Plan are critical because they will lead us to 2015 when all the Millennium Development Goals are due. As I mentioned in my debate on the 2011 Appropriation Bill 2011, my ministry is responsible for at least three of the eight Millennium Development Goals. We are also indirectly related to the other millennium development goals. Your support of the health budget is, therefore, highly appreciated because it will assist my ministry to work towards achievement of these very critical millennium development goals. In fact, this is the first time ever for the Ministry of Health and Medical Services executive to monitor at least one indicator for all the divisions both at the national and provincial level.

All the planning documents the Ministry has developed resulted from wide and comprehensive consultations with all stakeholders including provincial premiers, provincial health officers, development partners, NGO, faith based organisations, communities and even the private sector. My ministry fully believes that we play a critical role in the development of our nation, Solomon Islands. We play a key role in ensuring that we have a healthy population that will positively contribute to the socioeconomic development of this nation. We need healthy individuals, healthy families and healthy communities to produce a healthy and viable nation and, therefore, we are honoured to be part of that very important task.

I, however, would like to clearly inform again this honourable House that we are not alone in this very important role and responsibility. There are so many other stakeholders and organizations that contribute towards producing a healthy nation. Many of these stakeholders and organizations and even groups we sometimes do not realise and appreciate them. But they are organisations and line ministries that contribute to providing and promoting things like a

clean environment, good housing, nutritious food, good communication, good roads and infrastructures, good transport and good education especially for women and children. There are many more factors that directly contribute to the promotion and development of healthy communities in our nation. I therefore, would like to thank all the ministries and organizations for the part they play in building a healthy nation.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank all our development partners that are signatory to the Sector Wide Approach, a practice we have in place in the Ministry of Health for almost three years now. Our partners include AusAid, JICA, ROC, SPC, WHO, UNFPA, UNICEF, GAVI, World Bank as well as the Global Fund. There are lots of challenges we had faced together in the last two years in trying to address the challenges faced in the delivery and promotion of health services in our nation. However, I am happy to note that a lot of progress and improvement has been achieved over the two years since the SWAP arrangement started. I would, therefore, like to thank all our partners for their contribution, collaboration and cooperation in our efforts to ensure that we are able to improve the way we deliver health to our people in this country.

Delivery of health care is not a simple thing. It is a complex matter compounded by so many factors, especially when you take into consideration the geographically diverse nature of islands and cultures, attitudes and practices. My ministry will work closely with everybody and every organization to improve our efforts to address these complex challenges.

At this juncture, I also would like to thank all the central agencies and ministries for the great support they have provided my ministry to enable us to provide this very essential service. I would like to thank the Prime Minister's Office and Cabinet, the Ministry of Finance and Treasury, the Ministry of Development Planning and Aid Coordination. Also I would like to thank all other line ministries for their contribution, to enable us deliver the much needed services to our people, especially those in the rural and remote areas of the nation.

Let me now turn to some of the issues that have been raised by honourable Members in this House that need my updates. Let me inform the House that as I speak there are 113 nurses who have graduated from Atoifi as well as the Solomon Islands College of Higher Education that are just waiting to be recruited. If these nurses are neither nor recruited, the number of graduates for 2011 adding to the 113 will bring up the number of unemployed nurses to almost 150 to 200 nurses without employment. We will need to work closely with the central ministries like the Ministry of Public Service and the Ministry of Finance and Treasury to see the possibility of recruiting more nurses to work in our hospitals and clinics. I believe that with the priority organization policies that our corporate and strategic plans have identified, we will need to work very closely with the central ministries to address the critical issue.

I understand that the parliamentary special select committee that looked into the quality of services at the National Referral Hospital in 2010 has identified the need to increase the number of nurses and doctors working in the Central Hospital. I, however, must clearly state here that the 2011 budget does not allow for a significant increase in the recruitment of nurses at the National Referral Hospital.

My Ministry is currently reviewing two very important policy documents, and these are the Role Delineation Policy and the Minimum Package of Care Policy. These two important policies plus the human resource infrastructure, health financing policies and the medium term

expenditure framework which we are working on will enable us to present to central ministries and to this honourable House evidence based factors and the real cost of delivering health services in this country.

As I have alluded to earlier, the delivery of health services is a complex matter. However, with our good plans that are integrated and with the support of all partners, I believe we are in the right direction to contribute towards ensuring that we have a healthy and a prosperous Solomon Islands.

With the current number of nurses that are not able to be recruited by the Public Service, I am happy to announce that I am sending 24 nurses to Vanuatu to assist the Melanesian neighbours because as I have mentioned there are 130 nurses just waiting for employment but are not being recruited. I can assure the House that when I am given the green light to recruit more either this year or next year, the three Nursing Schools in the country have more than enough at this point in time.

My ministry is fully aware of the complexity and the demand of its services and will continue to ensure that we work together with all concern including this Honourable House to seek your support and guidance in our responsibilities and roles. I therefore, wish to thank you again for all the support you have given and will continue to provide to my Ministry. We will certainly do our best to work with everyone concerned to deliver our responsibility to the people of Solomon Islands.

My ministry looks forward to working closely with the new parliamentary select committee on health and medical services. And I would like to sincerely thank the Prime Minister for moving this very important Bill, and to thank honourable colleagues in this honourable chamber for your support for establishment of this very important committee. I fully believe that it is the right step to addressing a lot of challenges that my ministry is confronted with. I, therefore, will ensure that my ministry works closely with the new health and medical services parliamentary standing committee so that we can collectively address health challenges and to ensure that we develop a healthy Solomon Islands. I therefore, would like to take a bit of time to promote a healthy life style. For your information, my Ministry officials have started to walk for an hour every Wednesday to promote healthy professionals. My ministry in fact is planning to submit a cabinet paper soon to seek cabinet endorsement for all public servants to exercise regularly so that people will live longer and function better.

We believe that we need a healthy public service and health public servants to better deliver the services that we are tasked to. My officials are also working closely with the World Health Organization and the Attorney General's Chamber and other stakeholders to ensure that the Tobacco regulation is announced before the middle of this year. This is another public health initiative to promote a healthy life style and we will inform you in due course further details on this particular public health matter.

We have a great challenge out there in our country at this point of time and the sooner we address these issues, the better it will be for the good of our nation. We have public health as well as health care challenges and my ministry is trying its best to work with all our partners to address these challenges. We are committed to work with all our stakeholders, those that directly work with us and those that contribute indirectly to improved and better developed health in this nation.

Let me assure this honourable House and my honourable colleagues that my ministry will do its best to ensure that we work together with everybody to deliver better health services to our people. My ministry more than before has increased resources given to the provinces. As a health worker myself who has spent more than 30 years in some of the provinces in this country, I will ensure that this happens within the Ministry of Health.

Mr Speaker, thank you very much for the opportunity given to me to contribute to the sine die motion. I am honoured to contribute to this honourable motion on behalf of my ministry as well as the people of Ranongga/Simbo Constituency. Thank you very much for your attention and I fully support the motion.

Mr. SOGAVARE (MP East Choiseul): The motion before the House is that at the adjournment of Parliament today, 13th of April 2011, the present meeting is concluded and Parliament will stand adjourned sine die.

In moving this motion, the Prime Minister has made a few statements, which would be good if we have time to respond to them to express some of our views on them, but I know we do not have time because we are only given 10 minutes, and so I will only try and talk on some areas that I think is important to put forward to the government.

This meeting is predominantly a budget meeting. In fact it is a long awaited meeting after the Parliament last met and adjourned sine die and we have been waiting for this meeting for a long, long time. The people of this country are looking forward to this particular meeting because it is a meeting that is supposed to bring hope to the people of this country. It is based solely on big political statements the government has made and the people are looking forward with great expectations, and they expect to match the budget with big political statements that were made.

Looking at the budget itself and I think probably can be understood, judging from studying closely the way the budget is presented as we go on we come to understand the way the government is wanting to approach things. But the first time I see the budget I was disappointed. On hindsight, this meeting should have been held in November because I understand the Ministry of Finance has already prepared the budget at that time.

What I am expecting are major redirections the government has been trumpeting, they should be reflected in the budget, but that did not happen. But as we read the way the budget is formulated, we come to understand how the government wants to address the big things it has been telling us. I am saying this because this government is putting itself forward as a reform government, and one of the pillars in the acronym NCRA, the letter 'R' in the acronym stands for 'reform'. And as I have expressed already in some of the debates that have already happened, the government must deliver on the reforms before it is seen to be delivering something. Just looking at the budget, yes, there is increase in spending but it is increased spending on just the same areas. We are still maintaining the status quo, and in that respect I share some of the views that the member for North New Georgia has stated.

I just want to dwell on the reform and may be later on remind the government as Chairman of the Bills and Legislation Committee on bills we are expecting to come from government. The way we read the government's policy statements, it proposes two form approaches to the reform program which should also determine the level of importance

attached to those categories. They are fundamental reforms which involves the reform of the constitution and the legislation and deals with the issue of ownership and effective control of land and resources and socio economic reforms under the various sectoral reform programs.

With due respect, maybe later on when the government comes out very clear, but at this point in time the groupings or categories are as yet say very little about what exactly we are trying to achieve under the various areas other than them expressing the order of importance in terms of laws that needed to be reformed at this point in time. I am saying this because reform is a very powerful strategy in that it has the objective of first overhauling, reorganising, restructuring and redirecting the existing order of things. And so it is quite a powerful thing that the Government wants to do and if this is not handled very well, it could really disturb the order of things.

I agree that the country needs a comprehensive reform program to get it out of, I guess, its current trend, but we must be strategic about it. That means that the reforms must be on areas that are important to address the issues that we cannot afford to be careless about at the expense of the country continuing to deteriorate. Because of resource constraints as well, we cannot afford to be extravagant in our approach and focus only on areas that need reform to improve our ability to achieve the intentions of our national objectives.

Reforms will only make sense and meaningful if they drive a set of well focused and meaningful objectives that should be prioritised in accordance with well defined order of priority. That means the individual narrow focus of the series of reforms that seemed to be suggested by the Government must be refocused and strategized so that they can achieve the desired objectives. I may be wrong at this point in time just by reading the documents without may be looking at what the reform unit is going to do. I believe and maybe with some guidance here that this process must begin with providing some answers to some very strategic questions. And the questions are:

- What do we want to achieve in our reform programs?
- What do we want achieve in our reform programs?
- Are the areas identified for reform absolutely necessary to address the problems of the country?

To effectively answer that question is there a common understanding on the problems of the country? That is important because if we do not have common understanding and we address the wrong problems, we may not be doing justice to the programs that we wanted to undertake. The next fundamental question that I think is important for us to ask is: how are we going to strategize our reforms to achieve our desired outcomes. How are we going to organize the micro and the macroeconomic tools to effectively pursue the objectives of our reform? Are the tools effective? What aspects of the tools need reform to be effective if it is not effective? What is the time frame for the reforms? What roles will aid donors play in the reform? And who will drive those reforms?

In the light of what I have just outlined earlier, any reforms that are need-based must have a clear focus. In our case, we need to be clear whether we are addressing the structure, institutional, legal constitutional or strategic issues. What are we intending to address?

I am saying this because structural in its loose application will refer to a reorganization of key structures that support the delivery mechanisms of the Government because they are considered to have outlived their usefulness and relevance. For example, in the case of rural development where we talked about the much needed proper institutionalization of constituency, may have to be considered for improvement to the delivery of rural development. That reform becomes a structural issue, and that is what we must address.

In terms of institutional and legal constitutional or strategic reform, that would refer to the adequacy of our laws and the administrative procedures and the important micro and macroeconomic tools that must be relevant to the changing needs of the country. I am saying this because we need to remember that in the global context Solomon Islands is just another competitor in the fast moving world that is competing to survive. Unless we place our country in a position that it can effectively compete, we will not be able to compete with other countries. It therefore follows that an important component of the strategic approach is to be clear about the objectives of our reforms and the problems we are trying to address. This requires, as I have stated already, a full understanding of our problems and more importantly an understanding that is jointly agreeable by all parties.

What do we want to achieve? If that is not clearly spelt out as I have stated already in the policy statement of the government, although specific areas of reform are listed under three broad categories of fundamental reforms, social reforms and economic reforms. I believe these reforms need to be tied down to achieving clear and define national objectives driven by a clear development concept. More importantly, the determination of what we want to achieve in our reform programs must be consistent with our national objectives.

This is where we are contesting the appropriateness of the national objectives set by the government which is summed up in the following statements:

- Achieving greater autonomy for economic advancement through a new direction and leadership,
- Solomon Islanders enjoying more autonomy and improved wellbeing through an improved delivery of essential services like education, health and the availability of more paid jobs. One of the concepts they came up with here as well is of Solomon Islanders having a sense of fulfilment.

In my view, those objectives are only concerned with the demand side of the economy. I am saying this because unless the specific strategies also address the supply side of the economy, we will arrive at a situation where the economy will not be able to sustain the level of expenditure required to sustain the growing demands for government services and infrastructure development. It is any wonder that the budget that we have already is focused very heavily only on the demand side strategies. What the government is now urged to do is to review its implementation of the supply side strategies listed in its reform programs with the objective of arriving at a policy position where the following supply side objectives must be actively pursued, and I have listed three broad areas.

The first one, which is always an issue and probably an agenda of every government in Solomon Islands as a country is the attraction of high quality investments in all the productive

sectors in our economy that focuses on export oriented activities. These are people who come into the country utilizing the money supply in the system. No, these people must be actively earning money. The country is just like a human being where if money is just being put in the other side of the pocket, it is not growing, it needs to earn money from outside. Therefore, the investors that we bring into this country must be involved in export oriented activities.

Secondly, we encourage existing investors to expand and diversify their investments into export oriented activities. This is where tax incentives should work. The focus of tax incentives is still on new investors that come in. Tax incentive is something that is available in the act, but it needs to be strategically used so that the objective of giving out incentives is achieved. Thirdly, still on supply side strategy is that we encourage our people through a comprehensive constituency driven rural development strategy to participate in resource based export oriented economic activities. Unless we actively address these areas, we will still be utilizing the existing money supply; we will not be earning and this country will not be growing if our focus is only on areas within the budget. The budget is actually 99.9% demand side strategy.

All the above needs legislative and administrative changes to be achieved successfully and those strategies can be addressed now without us having to wait for the land reform program of the Government. The Government seems to be banking on its growth centre policies to achieve these objectives, and we acknowledge that. But with due respect that policy says really nothing new about some of these areas identified for the development of the centres. All it is saying, as was said by successive governments, is that we want to develop this area. That is what we are saying. The Government must take deliberate and aggressive steps to address the supply side strategies, and I am yet to see that manifesting.

This leads me to my last point on the legislative program of the government, as Chairman of the Bills and Legislation Committee. This is a very important concern, especially for the Government that is taking up reform as a pillar to mark its very existence. Without bringing those legislative changes in the areas proposed by the government, we will fail to deliver on our election promises, and we will be, I guess, in danger of probably joining the long queue of governments that exist to maintain the status quo. I am saying this because this Government advances itself as "we are going to come and do things differently, we are going to redirect this economy". And so I say this with all seriousness. It is important therefore that the government must be clear about its legislative programmes right from the very beginning. This will demonstrate that the Government is clear about the direction it is taking.

From the analysis of the various parts of the Government's policy statement, the Government's programs need to bring in these legislations, and I just want to list them down. There are 41 legislations in all that the government must as a matter of priority bring into Parliament for Parliament to pass before the policies the Government is talking about are going to work. The first one, of course, is constitutional reform, an amendment to the national constitution to return the ownership of land and resources to the people of Solomon Islands. The Prime Minister made that statement on the floor of Parliament and so this Parliament is waiting very eagerly for that legislation. The second one is political parties, an introduction of the proposed Political Parties and Administration Bill. I would like to suggest that some minor amendments may also need to be made to the constitution. I think this was brought to this

Parliament but we did not pass it, and that is to formally recognize the office of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition as suggested, appointment of shadow ministers and establishment of parliamentary secretaries and what we are going to do with the independent group. That amendment must come back for us to look into it again. The third is on electoral reform, amendments to the electoral laws to improve the electoral processes. The fourth is the Constituency Boundaries Commission, laws relating to that and revisit the constitutional amendment to addressing, maybe gender requirement as well for Parliament. It was suggested to look into that area and I think some views have now changed on the idea of increasing the number of seats to this Parliament. As was expressed yesterday, if we start to increase the number of standing select committees in the House and introducing parliamentary secretaries, introducing shadow ministers, it will fully utilize the existing number of parliamentarians, and so there is need for more MPs to make the work of Parliament effective.

Fifthly, land reform, we are waiting legislation on that to come through. Sixthly, customary law codification, this according to the Government will need an amendment to the Customary Law Recognitions Act. This is where the various customs are likely to be incorporated in the schedule to the principal act. I am not sure whether the Customary Recognition law that was passed in 2000 has become effective. If it does, then any codification of customary laws will become schedule to that particular legislation.

The next law this Parliament is expecting to enable the reform program of the Government work is demographic and coding system. We are looking forward to that legislation. Another one is law on health and medical reform and the intention of the Government to a devolution order to be approved by Parliament to devolve primary health care functions to the provinces. The Parliament is looking forward for that Devolution Order to come. Another one is the law relating to expand tertiary education provision in Solomon Islands for the introduction of Higher Education Authority Act in the Ministry of Education.

This Parliament is also looking forward to an amendment to the National Provident Fund Act to establish a micro finance scheme to support economic growth centres, saving schemes for non members and a pension scheme for Members of Parliament. We are looking forward to these changes that the Ministry of Finance is going to bring to Parliament. The next one is the intention to legislate the long term development plan should come from the Minister of Development Planning. Another legislation are tax reforms from the Ministry of Finance, amendments to the appropriate revenue law to maximize revenue collection and an amendment to the Income Tax Act to require mining companies to pay tax in the form of gold bar. We are looking forward to that and it is very interesting because this is a monetary and exchange rate related policy. This Parliament is looking forward to that legislation to come. Also resource based tax, we need to be clear on the tax base, the trade-off between existing taxes in tax base, the rate of tax and how it will affect the productive sector. We are looking forward to that legislation.

The thirteenth law is intergovernmental fiscal coordination on the introduction of the proposed fiscal responsibility act. We are looking forward to that. The fourteenth is on wage/salary and this is the establishment of proposed wage/salary commission. The fifteenth is on the area of balance of payment and this is the introduction of special levy and import prohibition under appropriate finance laws. I think the intention here is to protect local

industries, and so we are looking forward to that law. In terms of monetary and exchange rate policy, the possibility of reviewing the appropriate legislation to ensure the orderly development of the financial system.

I will just run through these quickly, and maybe not in detail. On agriculture we are waiting for a law to be brought in on the establishment of the food security commission. I think that should be a bye law. On banking and micro finance facilities, the Secured Transactions Act may need to be reviewed. On fisheries, the need for a regulation to review all licenses and fees in USA dollars. On forestry, the enactment of the new forestry bill. On forestry again is amendment to relevant laws for restructuring of the log taxation regime. On manufacturing is enactment of EPZ legislation. On mining, there is need to incorporate the requirement of extractive industry transparency initiative. The Parliament is looking forward to that law to come here. On mining as well is possible legislation to restrict the exporting of important data and where the data have been exported, they must be repatriated. On mining as well is the need for a possible legislation to establish a corporatized secretariat for the mining industry. Parliament is looking forward to that, and I think it is something that will be structured closely to the one that is established in Papua New Guinea so may be the government is yet to see that set up.

On environment, conservation and climate is the need for legislation to protect and manage the country's biodiversity including flora and fauna and the eco system. On foreign relations is the need for amendments to the Facilitation of International Assistance Act 2003 to take up the recommendations of the FRC on the review of RAMSI. On reconciliation and peace, an enactment of the Forgiveness Bill, and we are looking forward to that.

On central national information data is the need for possible legislation to establish the national information data. We are looking forward to that legislation. In regards to governance is the need for possible legislation of rules to properly manage constituency funds. On national security is the possible amendment to the FIA Act to carry the recommendations of the FRC. On commerce and industry, the introduction of new trust legislation to improve governance of and accountability of trust in Solomon Islands. On private sector growth, a new competition and consumer legislation, and we are looking forward to that. On rural micro financing, a new credit union legislation. In terms of modernized government financial rules, the review of public financial rules and instructions. I think this is to improve the accountability of the government.

On quarantine services is the need for enactment of a harmonized bio-security bill. We are looking forward to that. On environment and conservation is repeal and introduction of a new national act. On meteorology, we are looking forward to the review of the Meteorology Act 1985. On the Ombudsman and Leadership Code Commission, the Government has intention to review the relevant laws governing the work of these two good governance institutions. On police and the disciplinary force, an introduction of the new Police Act, and we are looking forward to that. And the last one on correctional services is proclamation and implementation of the new act and regulation for the correctional services.

Why did I go through pains reading all these. Unless these laws are passed, the big political statements that the Government is making might not be delivered. The Government needs those legal frameworks to deliver those things. From the policy statements, as I have said

already, 41 bills need to come to Parliament. And it would be helpful to the Bills and Legislation Committee if the Government can come up with a possible timetable for the introduction of these bills, so that parliamentary processes can start. It does take time for our officers to carry out research into the background of these laws. Ideally, since these bills have direct effect on the delivery of government's promises, they must be introduced during the first two years, this year and next year. Failing that, the areas identified for reform, as I said already, will be neglected.

Ideally, the areas affecting the Government's major policies like land reform, growth centres and certain areas of constitutional reform must be prioritized. This means that Parliament must be called to meet regularly, preferably two or three times a year to deal with these legislative changes. These bills, in my view, are setting out the new direction that the Government is talking about. It is, therefore, imperative that the Government quickly comes up with its timetable and the legislative program so that my committee in this Parliament will start looking into them.

Just a small warning, and that is care must also be taken not to fall into the trap of trying to come up with many legislative changes, which in the end we become over legislated with laws that achieve very little. I know the Reform Unit in the Prime Minister's office will direct the government's legislative process. So the onus really is on the Government.

In closing, I join the other colleagues in thanking you, Mr Speaker, for putting up with us during the course of these two weeks as well as the office of the Clerk to Parliament, the secretaries to these committees. These people deserve our unreserved acknowledgement for the great work they have been doing. Without them I do not know where we will be in terms of the productivity of Parliament. Of course, the security officers as well need to be thanked for keeping the compound safe.

With those, I do not have any problem at all to join the Leader of Opposition who has spoken earlier to support that this Parliament must end today. Deliver the finance and funds so that we can go home and deliver the funds for you, so that when we come back the next time you call Parliament to meet, we can discuss the programs and policies that you are going to bring. In saying that, I support this motion.

Hon. SOFU (Minister for Public Service): As rightly stated by those who have already spoken before me, this meeting is purposely for us to come and discuss the budget to be used this financial year we are now in and which will end on the 31st of December.

First of all, let me thank and congratulate the two new members who won the recent bye-elections of Mbaegu/Asifola and Shortlands. The people of your constituencies have trust and confidence in you to represent them here in Parliament. I stand here on behalf of my people to congratulate both of you.

On the same note, I wish to congratulate my friend, my brother and former prime minister for taking up the post of the official Leader of the Opposition to provide the checks and balance on the Government. Mr Speaker, I also want to thank you for your patience and understanding throughout this meeting of Parliament. Indeed, you have performed outstandingly well, and I wish to congratulate you. Let me also convey my sincere appreciation to those who have also worked hard in contributing towards the formulation of the budget. I

thank the staff of Parliament, the Clerk, the Deputy Clerk, the committee secretariats, the permanent secretaries, not forgetting our media people as well who have been relaying information to our rural populace. When you campaigned you told your people that “I am your voice in Parliament” and so it is very important that our rural populace hear our voices. Thank you indeed the media for making that service available to our people.

I also wish to thank the honourable Prime Minister for his able leadership. The Prime Minister, you have set the course, and we are your crews and your passengers. Everything we say here in Parliament is heard by our people, which made them have high expectations of us. I would like to thank my colleague ministers for being responsible of the ministries under their care because I know it is not an easy task but a difficult one to look after our ministries and our constituencies at the same time. The task before us is not easy.

This second meeting of the Ninth Parliament has been very fruitful indeed because our deliberations on the floor of Parliament are focussed on national interest. When I first came into Parliament, some books were thrown over there by some members of Parliament when they become angry. But this second meeting of the Ninth Parliament has seen MPs deliberating national interests. That is what parliament is meant for, this parliament or any parliaments in the world.

The passage of the 2011 Budget of about \$2.2 billion is a historic one with a surplus of \$24 million. This is a landmark and precedence for any future governments. Whatever you may say about the budget, but that is the focus of the Government, the NCRA Government for its people. Since we gained independence some 30 years ago, any governments that came in have tried to change things, shifted policies, and this is because they are geared towards providing services to our people. That is the sole reason, and that is exactly what NCRA has in mind.

We, as members of Parliament have passed the budget, and our people will judge us based on how we implement the budget. Our officers are serving the government in the 24 ministries, and our people will trust us when we deliver services to them. And those services may not be in bigger ways, but the little we can do for our people will gain their confidence and trust on us, they will have confidence in us. The governance of this country goes beyond Parliament.

The chiefs and church leaders must be thanked for the good work they have been providing to our societies. I was very encouraged to see the Ministry of Home Affairs in its program of trying to bring church leaders together. The Ministry of Provincial Government succeeded in bringing premiers together through the well accorded body, the Premiers Conference. That is very good and important.

We placed the cross first before the flag, and yet we sidelined the cross by placing the flag first. I can remember may be last year or the year before when the Ministry of Youth organized the youth parliament when students came and debate in here just like what we, members of Parliament are doing right now. I think it would be good to see our bishops, church leaders, pastors and elders to do likewise, the cross, so that they too can also be involved in policies and participate in whatever the government participates in.

At this juncture, I would like to thank the cleaning program that is going on in our city. When you drive along the roads you can see the city is very clean. I appreciate very much what

the Honiara Town Council and also Keithie Saunders Beautification group are doing through the cleaning program in Honiara, and I want this to continue.

I also want to acknowledge the Chinese Association for improvement to the standards of buildings in China Town as we can see. That is what we want to see, we want to see change. Those are business houses. I appreciate very much improved standard of buildings in the centre of the city. I want to acknowledge them in their effort of rebuilding buildings in China Town that were burnt down some years ago.

One very important point worth noting by past governments, the NCRA Government now in power or any governments in the future is that any infrastructures built for this country should not only be for the purpose of constructing them, but they should be constructed to last for a long time. This is because a considerable amount of money is spent on constructing those infrastructures because we are working and building against nature. I say this because whenever there is heavy rain and because of our poor drainage system, the rain usually damages our roads. Thus roads that were only maintained or constructed last week can be damaged again this week or the following week. And we must not use those roads as a means to fundraise. I believe my colleague Minister for Infrastructure Development will take note of this. We need roads that are durable and not roads that are damaged tomorrow by the rain that fell today since a lot of money were spent on those roads. Aid donors are also helping us to construct those roads, and I thank the Ministry for Infrastructure Development, my former ministry for working together on that.

In previous sine die motions I never thanked the telecommunication companies, and so I want to thank them now; Telekom and Bemobile. Today you can be here in Honiara and call the provinces. Our constituents in the provinces too can call us here in Honiara asking us to top up their phones.

(Members giggling)

You know what I am saying. Because of that we want to thank and acknowledge those two telecommunication companies for easy access to telecommunication services they are providing. I believe we have access to communication throughout the whole country.

I forgot to thank farmers in the country when I spoke on the budget and so I would like to thank them too. They are hardworking people that sweat, the copra cutters, the cocoa farmers, whatever activities they are involved in, we must remember them because they contribute towards the economic development of this country. I applaud them that whatever contributions they make, little though it may be in our villages and the rural areas, and not even recognized by anyone, yet they contribute towards the economy of this country. And so I wish to take this opportunity to thank them, especially a few farmers in East Kwaio. If you go there in East Kwaio you would see cocoa farms there, just like you, we are the same, coconuts are also there, but that is the best they can do. You may think it is not big enough but that is the best they can do. Resources, its availability and so forth is like that. And so I would like to thank the Government through the Ministry of Agriculture because I can see money for cocoa and other things in the budget. Our people are sweating working very hard in the rural areas.

I would like to thank the Government for maintaining the RCDF and the Rural Livelihood funds, which a lot of our people are complaining about. But those funds have obviously assisted many of our people. Those funds help farmers to clean their coconut plantations, their cocoa farms and other things that they are involved in, which we did not even recognize. I am sad that some are only good at big mouthing with a lot of criticisms. Whatever criticisms are made, but as long as we do the right thing is what matter because you might not know the situation in the constituency of another member of Parliament. I would like to thank the Government for continuing to maintain these funding to assist our rural people.

Whilst I am still on the floor, I would like to thank the sailors, the pilots and truck drivers that are transporting and moving people and goods from one point to the other. They are participating in the economic development of this country. I want to register my vote of thanks to them for assisting in transportation and service delivery. Please, perform your duties with pride and responsibility.

I also would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge all public officers, those working here in Honiara and throughout the nine provinces of this country for continuing to provide services although it is not easy. When I participated in the debate of the 2011 Appropriation Bill, I mentioned that development depends on three things: manpower, resources and material. There are times that public officers find it difficult when things are not possible but they try their very best to provide service on behalf of the government, the past, the present and future governments. I wish to acknowledge them for the good work they have been doing. The advices normally given to the government are by public officers. When we want this, they do it for us, and so I would like to thank all public officers from the bottom to the top.

I also would like to thank the Public Service union for being very responsible and continuing to work with the Ministry of Public Service. Please know that the unions and my ministry are serving the same people, we work for our people, and so we need understanding. There are situations that need us coming together to address them. There are also situations that are difficult to address, but we think of ways to address the situation. I would like to thank the Public Service union for its understanding.

Before I sit down I would like to join the other colleagues to also thank my good people of East Kwaio, the chiefs and church leaders for their understanding and support. We all know that these are not easy times in leading our people who have different needs, different aspirations, and so I would like to thank them for their patience and their understanding. I understand the support they have rendered to me in the last four years will continue in the next four years. Things will not easily come as you would have expected, but I will try my very best to represent you inside this House and outside of this House.

Once again I would like to thank you, Sir, for allowing me to contribute briefly to this customary motion to end Parliament meetings. Thank you honourable Prime Minister for seeing it fit in moving this motion. As we are now ready to dismiss and depart for our various homes, I wish all of you and your families God's blessing as you journey home to your constituencies and to your people. I support the motion and I resume my seat.

Mr LUSIBAEA (MP North Malaita): First of all, I wish to thank the honourable Prime Minister for moving the sine die motion to enable us to contribute on the floor of Parliament. On behalf of my good people of North Malaita, I extend my gratitude to all Members of the House for supporting the 2011 National Budget, which will allow the government to implement its development priorities for the wellbeing of Solomon Islanders. Now that the budget is passed the challenge for the government and its implementing ministries and entities is to align realistic work plans and strategies to allocated budget lines so that the expected budget output can be felt by our people

As this is a record budget, I wish to kindly remind all government ministries to be innovative and explore opportunities beyond the 'business as usual approach' so that maximum output can be achieved with fewer resources. Otherwise some of the key initiatives promoted by the NCRA Government may not be fulfilled. Also, I must commend the Government for allocating some millions of dollars for development of the Suava Bay economic growth centre which will greatly benefit the people of North Malaita. North Malaita covers three constituencies of North Malaita, Lau/MBaelelea and Mbaegu/Asifola. I am confident that the progress of this development would be fast tracked as my people are eagerly waiting for this initiative to materialize. Similarly, allow me to thank my good people of North Malaita for maintaining their trust and confidence in me to be their leader in Parliament. I can assure my constituents that I will do everything to ensure their voices are heard.

Now that I have the floor I must also update the honourable House of some key initiatives that I am pursuing for my constituency over the last eight months, since August last year. So far the first phase of one-solar-per household program has been delivered in 2010. In that phase, more than 300 solar sets were equally distributed throughout the constituency. In the next few weeks we are planning to implement phase two of the program along with the solar materials recently allocated to my constituency by the Republic of China on Taiwan. This program is supported under the livelihood fund for my constituency and I believe by 2014, the whole constituency should be lighted with electricity.

Apart from that I have invested funds to support the construction of a new wharf at Malu'u and also two new feeder roads, which are the Ainuka Community High School in Manakwai and the road leading up to the Malu'u Police Station. These are few of my infrastructure development visions for North Malaita.

I also value the importance of health and education in my region, and as a result we have successfully facilitated more than 100 boxes of medical supplies and equipments from New Zealand delivered to our clinic in North Malaita in December last year.

In regards to education in September 1st, 2011, I provided financial support to cover part of the school fees of more than 900 students of my constituency for secondary schools from forms 1 – 7, vocational schools, bible colleges, and local tertiary institutes in Honiara, like the USP, UPNG and the Solomon Islands College of Higher Education. This support benefits more than 40 different schools throughout the country.

My focus for the remaining part of this year is to invest in income generating livelihood and infrastructure projects for my constituency. In addition I value the importance of our culture and how it sets each of us to be where we are today. Hence, I must salute the government and all stakeholders concerned for successfully mediating a solution to the standoff

between Fiji and Vanuatu over the chairmanship of the Melanesian Spearhead group. In my view, the reconciliation ceremony in Honiara and December between the two Melanesian neighbours is a clear reflection of how we as a Melanesian country sort out conflicts in our culture.

On that note, I wish to register my dissatisfaction on the judiciary system over how my recent case was handled and intentionally dragged to disadvantage my obligations and responsibility as a duly elected leader for North Malaita. I am concerned that the trend we are seeing in this country is a parallel and selective judiciary. There are a bunch of lawyers and judges whose salaries are covered by the government while another group their salaries are paid from abroad. With this current arrangement there could be issues in regard to court neutrality and impartiality due to the notion best summarised as 'you cannot buy the hands that feed you'. As a result, I am least convinced of the true intention of the case being pursued by my brother, the MP for Aoke/ Langalanga questioning the legality of my early release by the Parole Board, under provisions stated in the Correctional Services Act 2007, an Act that the respective MP was part of the government that passed it. I wish him good luck concerning that case. With those few remarks I support the motion.

Hon. HA'AMORI (*Minister for Education & Human Resources Development*): I would like to thank the Honourable Prime Minister for this motion as well as to thank the honourable Leader of Opposition for his understanding as I go through the remarks that I am about to make.

Since the formation of the National Coalition for Reform and Advancement Government (NCRA), its intention has been to remove barriers that impede our development progress. I believe it is still the objective of the NCRA Government that I am a part of that whatever has to be removed will be removed regardless of how convenient it may be for some sectors or individuals in our society. Our policies may appear simple and not altogether original, but I can assure you that this government has a serious determination and loads of political will to win.

Yes, we may be disturbing the status quo enjoyed by a few individuals and interest groups in our drive to advance the course of this nation, but so what? What needs to be done must be done. We shall not apologise for actions calculated and taken to improve the lives of the people of this country. Furthermore, this government will not take a 'no' for an answer if the action that is necessary to be taken is for the good of this nation.

The policy expressions of this government are natural desires of those on this side of the House for the people of Solomon Islands, so I am not ashamed to assure you that we shall not rest until all the policies are implemented. If the budget of 2011 is a fully funded budget, which I believe it is or rather it better be, at least in my ministry I am determined to spend every cent of my Ministry's approved appropriation. I am fully convinced that money is only as good as it is being spent. For far too long now we have been toying around with the lives of the people by not spending all the budget allocations or spend only in areas of little importance and of little socio economic impact.

The planned motion of no confidence that you have so wisely rejected, Mr Speaker, and I salute you for that is the most recent manifestation of the nonsense that is becoming all too common in this honourable House. Think about it, Mr Speaker, that the NCRA Government is

just barely starting to serve this nation when in our very questionable wisdom we were going to put a motion of no confidence across its path. On what basis are we going to consider such a motion? If you ask me I would say that the situation we have just averted is the ultimate expression of irresponsibility.

I understand that there is provision in our national constitution for motions of “no confidence” to be tabled in Parliament. But such provisions must be invoked with responsibility. It should be used only when it is very obvious that a government has to be changed because it is compromising the expressed interests of the people of this country. Our most recent attempt to bring in a motion of no confidence must be deemed as self serving and can only be calculated to serve selfish reasons and not the people of this nation.

Motions of no confidence distract the attention of governments from concentrating on what they should be doing. As a matter of fact, there is no politics in motions of no confidence, only disturbances. It is on this basis that I applaud your wisdom to resist the temptation to allow the most recent attempt to bring it about. As no government ever of this nation is out to destroy the country, legitimate reasons for motions of no confidence are scarce.

Besides the fact that we mature politically at different rates, the NCRA Government is stable, and I can assure you and assure the nation that we hold dear the responsibilities entrusted to us by the Ninth Parliament to reform and advance the development aspirations of our beloved country. Maybe to some people in this House, this Parliament is only a stepping stone to launch themselves in other places. But for most of us, these clumps of corals will be our home forever. And so it makes sense that it is our sheer determination to make it as comfortable as possible. Our decision to stay on course is our guarantee for an improved Solomon Islands.

We are national leaders and as such we must not only be seen as national leaders, but we must live the talk. Evermore, we must examine our motives to determine whether they are complementary to national interest or self serving. It is very insulting when one realizes that what he or she is hearing is half truth and yet such these disinformation are continued to be advanced. This kind of treatment demeans a person because the receiver of half truth is being treated as a fool when he or she is not. We must avoid degrading our political and personal integrity at all costs by avoiding this distasteful behaviour.

We are our constituencies’ contribution to national governance. We are not our constituencies anymore once we are elected. Our primary reason to be here is not to take back goods to our constituencies but rather to participate in nation building at the highest level in the land. As long as we hold the privilege of being here we are national leaders. It is a mistake to regard ourselves as constituency leaders for through election to this House we are to serve all constituencies and not just serving our constituencies of origin. One of our prime responsibilities is therefore is national unity. It is because we have not fully appreciated this fact that we often create destabilizing factions in this House. There is no place of fractionalization in this honourable House.

Considering we are just over half a million in terms of population size, the budget we have just approved is for the time being sufficient. Coupled with the assurance by the honourable Finance Minister that our budget is fully funded, we have a brighter future. The

only things we have to watch out for are the red tapes that we often put up to become barriers to accessing the resources we need to work with.

It is sickening to note that we have been operating on the basis of doubt and distrust all these years. What an environment and atmosphere to work in! No wonder we never get anywhere. These two issues do not base on facts so when used as operational basis they only slow down progress. For example, we waste a lot of time standing in bank queues all because the banks regard all its customers as dishonest criminals first and foremost. Try opening a bank account and you will soon realize what I am saying is true. We are subjected to an authentication mule that is made up only on of assumptions and insinuations. In my opinion this is a very sick way to do business and we can only make our society to be sicker if we continue to facilitate this attitude through the retention of many of our out of date financial rules and regulations.

I also call on the aid donors to this country to be conscious of this important point and relax what needs to be relaxed, so that whatever resources are available through them must be expended as intended to advance the development aspirations of our nation. It must be our determined effort to minimise red tapes that are barriers to accessing the development funds available in the government ministries and non government organisations. Since independence, much money that could have been spent in our economy was not spent in our economy.

Why do we still wonder about the slowness of the growth of our economy when we have not attended to the basics? I further ask what good is money when it is sitting idle in some coffers. We cannot eat money, we cannot clothe ourselves with money, we cannot cover ourselves from the negative impact of the elements with money and we cannot do ourselves any good with stored money, so spend it all. Money can only benefit us when we spend it. As I have already said earlier money is only as good as it is spent.

As a measure of reform I call on my colleagues in this honourable House to spend all the money in their trust that is intended to be spent. Save no coins, should be one of our important development objectives after the passage of the 2011 national budget.

Mr Gukuna (*interjection*): Tell the Minister the surplus, surplus for what?

Hon. Ha'amori: What needs to be done must be done and as such should not be left to another day or to another person, authority or jurisdiction to do it. A fine example of this point can be seen on the issue of national training that was dealt with recently by the NCRA Government. Some of us want to consider the action as corruption and improper, and so I will now take the opportunity to inform this House and the nation about what happened.

As has always been the practice, in 2010 applications were made to the Ministry of Education and Human Resource seeking government consideration and endorsement for scholarship assistance. At the appropriate time, the MEHRD National Training Unit processed the applications according to the ministry's established processes and adopted regulations and informed the Minister of its intention to select only 36 candidates. Considering there were hundreds of applications, I am of the conviction that the proposed 36 is too small a number to accept.

When I inquired for the reasons why the proposal is to take only 36, I was informed by the officials that it was mainly due to the fact that this year we will not have the PNG scholarship support that we have enjoyed in the last couple of years under the PNG bilateral assistance to Solomon Islands. I asked why not, and I was informed by various sources that Solomon Islands did not submit on time the relevant information requested by Papua New Guinea when it was preparing its budget for this year.

Among those who were blamed for not facilitating the relevant information to PNG on time was the Minister of Education and Human Resources Development before the general elections of 2010. The careless oversight and action costed this country millions of dollars in 2010, and this year it will cost at least \$19million. It is because Solomon Islands Government will have to meet the cost of its student studying in Papua New Guinea, and that is why the Ministry has no choice but to propose only to take 36 candidates for scholarship this year.

The Minister has no choice but to override the intention to consider only 36 applicants. Being mindful of the financial constraints faced by the Ministry, I called for the consideration of at least 40 applicants. Realising the reasonableness of the call by the Minister of Education to increase the number, the Ministry of Education NTU decided to consider 75 candidates. It should be noted that these 75 candidates were selected through the normal processes of the Ministry using the Grade Point Average (GPA) of 3 or above as the acceptable academic grades. Those who meet this criteria of GPA of 3 or above as approved by the National Training Committee, numbered around 354. When 75 of these 354 were given scholarships at least 279 were unplaced. It is at this point that I alerted the Ministry of Finance of my intention to request additional funds to provide additional scholarships and salvage the situation.

Soon a Cabinet Paper was prepared for the intention and presented to Cabinet. In its great wisdom, the Cabinet endorsed the paper and approved the request. About \$25million was approved and a request for the Minister's discretion was also granted. In effect, the granting of the discretion authority to the Minister is simply formalizing and regularizing what has always been the practice, not only in the Ministry of Education but also in other ministries. No ministers of education before me can honestly deny exercising discretion, however, illegitimate, when it comes to assisting students to get scholarships.

Mr. Gukuna (*interjection*): That is corruption, you are serving yourself.

Hon. Ha'amori: The only difference here is I have decided to formalize it. As you can see, I have made a sovereign decision because something has to be done to rescue the more than 270 potential students who were unplaced for scholarships. They are Solomon Islanders, it is their money and so I see no reason why I should deny the privilege for them to benefit from additional government funds. Their non-placement was only for financial reasons and not because of lack of intellectual prowess. Consequently, in exercise of legitimate discretion, I supported the application of 42 applicants who approached the Minister to explain their situations. I should also point out the 42 should be seen against 279 unplaced applicants and not 75 as has been carried in one of our local papers.

Furthermore, the rest of the unplaced candidates were processed by the Ministry through its normal processes. If I had not done what I did, who else would the 42 Solomon

Islanders appeal to for mitigation? If I had not assisted these applicants, I would have made myself redundant. For what use is a minister who cannot invoke additional powers to save a situation from serious deterioration?

I also wish to add that these 42 applicants were both in-service and pre-service applicants from all career paths and from all over the country. The truth is only a negligible number of Ministers' children were beneficiaries, as some would like to have us believe. If there were some MPs recommendations, I can assure you that they are not MPs children and they were subject to the same meal as the others in the Minister's discretion list. Being an educator by profession, I could not see myself restricted to the criteria of GPAs only. There are many mitigating factors that influence academic outcomes in individuals and so I allow myself to hear other potential extenuating factors presented by those who eventually ended up in my discretion list.

In the foregoing action, I used two criteria to guide my consideration of the applicants. These are an applicant should score at least GPA of 3 and must be accepted by the University or College in which he or she is intending to study in. To the best of my knowledge, only one applicant scored a GPA of just a little less than 3. However, this applicant is accepted by the University of the applicant's choice and so if the applicant is good enough for the University, the applicant is also good enough for me to consider.

I cannot apologise to you or anyone for the action I took in the matters being explained as long as the action was of benefit to aspiring students of this country. The action was right and free of alleged corruptions. As such, those who questioned my action and that of the Cabinet which authorized me to do so, must accept this action I have taken to develop the intellectual and the skills capacity of our country's human resource.

On the issue of meddling in our internal affairs, allow me to make these few remarks. We would be naive to think that there is no such thing as meddling in other nation's affairs, for there is definitely such vested interest in existence. I submit to you the following quotations to substantiate the claim and there can be the possibility of conspiracy on the part of non Solomon Islands jurisdictions.

I am very conscious of the time, and so allow me just only to read one perhaps. We have been accused as a failing state and because of that things will come in that are detrimental to other interests. But I would like to quote this 'it also appears from the evidence that western leaders and commentators may have over stated or at best offered a misleading impression of the threats posed by a failing or a failed state. There does not appear to be a strong correlation between state failure and some of the worst forms of transnational criminal activities like terrorism and money laundering. Where there is a link state failure by itself does not necessarily account for the activity. Other factors such as corruption or poor governance which exist in both strong and weak states are also important considerations.

In all these reasons, to meddle in our affairs, one thing is apparent and that is they decide what they will do based on their own assumptions and conclusions about a situation that may befall our country. Our control over our own affairs is now in question.

There are more serious documents about the interference issue, but we do not have time for them at this moment. It is our mandate and solemn duty to guard this nation against all evils. If we are not aware of these possible undercurrents, we may be unconsciously aiding

those who do not have our best interests at heart. There is no such thing as a free gift, conspicuous or otherwise, so we must be mindful of the aid offered to us from time to time. We are supposed to be guiding and guarding our nation, not aiding in its destruction. It is to protect the freedom of the citizens of this country and to avoid being slaves and subject to others that we cannot continue indefinitely to factor aid money into our national budgets and development discussions.

Economic development is perhaps the commonest intersection point of all governments since independence. Unfortunately, the justification for this matter of economic growth is still not decided, although we have been around as an independent nation for more than 30 years. It is important that we decide what will be the attributes and the characters of the Solomon Islands we want. When we decide what will be the nature and the character of the new Solomon Islands, we will be more focused on how we do business beginning at grassroots levels all the way up to national power houses. Do we only want to be known by a dress or do we want to be known about something more than just a national dress identity? Simple as this question may appear to be, in my opinion, it is one of the important questions that we must quickly seek an answer for.

In pursuance of the need to be more streamlined and focused in how we do business, allow me to briefly explain the other strategy adopted by the NCRA Government to cause rural development. The other development concept adopted by the NCRA Government besides the growth centres is the rural economic community (REC) for short. In this concept, a constituency as we know them now is considered an autonomous economic entity. All that makes Solomon Islands functioning as an economic community are replicated in the rural economic community except for civil matters. The one aim of REC under this concept is financial independence. The argument is that with financial independence will come all the other social considerations. This aim is very achievable indeed when one considers that we have economic resources in abundance right now.

Capital to cause development to be on its way to a desirable end is already available right now. All that we need to come up with is a mechanism to convert our natural money, and that is our natural resources into our national currency or rural economic community currencies, if you like. After a conversion mechanism has been established, the base of our rural economies should be broadened with feasible economic enterprises. To process our natural money which is our natural raw materials, we do not even need our national currency. We can develop a local currency for this matter.

We cannot hope to have enough money for development only from our export receipts. It is because of this that aid money is until now continues to be introduced into our development equations. As long as we cannot make enough money through export receipts, we will continue to need aid money. As long as we continue to use aid money, we will continue to be subject to other peoples' whims. We do not have to be rocket scientists to work out this logic. Selling to earn money to cause development is a very ineffective and a disastrous way to make currencies available for development operations. If we continue to do this, we will continue to remain in the domains of canteens and hawkers. To put it simply, this is no way to financing the development of a country.

There can be a way forward in this area of financing development if only we reconsider our monetary policies and repackage our currency. What we have come to accept about monetary policy is nothing short of a conspiracy to keep enslaving us. We must accept the fact that we are stuck here for good if we do not reconsider our policies on this matter.

Finally, allow me to say something to my constituency of West Makira. Before I resume my seat, I wish to thank the chiefs, community elders, colleague political leaders of my constituencies, five community governments, and my good people of West Makira constituency at large. It is a good thing that we have legitimate committee governments established and administrations because now we will definitely help to oversee development in our constituency at close proximity. Now we will not have to endure the difficulties of remote governance. In due consideration of this fact, our future can only be brighter than yesterday. Please note and understand that our ultimate aim in the West Makira constituency economic community is financial independence and that is still my determined result to achieve this goal.

Our objective towards achieving our aim is threefold: (i) development of the constituency marketing infrastructure, (ii) expansion of the constituency's wealth base, and thirdly introduction of feasible economic ventures into West Makira constituency so as to establish new economic ventures to protect ourselves from economic shocks. I continue to request for your undivided support so that we can bring about the socio-economic development we have always been waiting for since independence. I will continue to work with you, especially each ward community governments to bring about the necessary changes that will facilitate the achievement of our ultimate goal, financial independence for the people of West Makira constituency. With these few remarks I support the motion.

Mr GUKUNA (MP Rennell/Bellona): Thank you for giving me the opportunity to talk after the Minister of Education who has just given us a lecture on how to behave in this House. I agree with his lecture because that is his profession, but I do not agree with the way he rubbishes the intention of this side of the House to move a motion. That only demonstrates a personal lack of understanding of the motion because that is the very heart of checks and balances, as you know, Mr Speaker. So I do not accept what my colleague Minister of Education has said. He seems to forget that we got here in 2011 because of past governments. He just came in, it is only eight months and he thinks that this country started this year during his time. We came here because of you, because of past prime ministers and I do not accept what he seems to be implying.

I admire what he did in requesting additional funds, and that is what all ministers are supposed to do; take care of their ministries, ask for funds, look for funds because that is what ministers are supposed to do. But I disagree with the fact that he asked for discretion for him to select the students. On what basis is that made? Why has he not taken the money and continue the process of selection? And why he as a minister should take the discretion to help the 43? What happened to the other 200 students who are being unplaced? That discretion has set a very bad and dangerous precedence. When I am going to be the minister I will seek that discretion so that I will also send some students too whom I think should be sent. That is my comment on that. I think I am entitled to say that just as the Minister was entitled to say what he said.

Mr Speaker, thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak on this motion. I would like to also thank the honourable Prime Minister for moving this motion of Sine Die that is now before this House. In support of this motion, allow me to first of all express my sincere gratitude to you, Mr Speaker. Your good self have guided this House during the past two and half weeks, and I must say that you did very well with much composure, in spite of the fact that you have to sit up there without a break a lot of times. Your commitment to the sittings was apparent so much that you did not see the need for you to utilise your deputy, which I noticed he has been here all the time but he was not needed. Your deputy is very capable as the Deputy Speaker, and so you might want to think about using him at some point in our future meetings.

None of my colleagues should complain in this House, we have been taken care of. The Clerk, her deputy, and the rest of the staff working in this building should be thanked for the work they have done in guiding this meeting. The Police too did a good job, even though they seemed to be here when the Prime Minister is here, leaving the rest of us without police security. But I thank them for providing us security.

This meeting is short, but it comes and goes and now it is just about to go with everything that you can ask for in a parliament. Inside this chamber we dealt with two appropriation bills, four motions, excluding exchanges over a no confidence motion that was supposed to be moved. We dealt with questions and answers, two oaths and now this motion; which is eight businesses in total. During this meeting too we took the opportunity to clear issues that have been of concern to us and the public. Despite of what we may have said about our exchanges, I think it is good for us, especially the government in particular. We did this inside this chamber and while we were doing this, there were a lot of things happening outside the chamber too. There was lobbying, literal crossing of the floor was happening too, and people were hopping, hopping, hopping, hopping, hopping. It does not stop outside, we brought this thing here. But I just want to remind the people who always hop around that they have one more chance to hop because there is going to be legislation coming in very soon and you will not have that chance to hop. So please 'hop again because this is the last chance for you to do what you love to do - hopping!

(giggling and laughter)

Hon. Lilo (*Interjecting*): What about hopping inside the chamber from there to there?

Mr Speaker: Order, order!

Mr Gukuna: Ask the Minister of Finance to be in order. And it is not bad for this meeting.

Speaking of oaths, I think I should take this opportunity to personally congratulate the new members of this House and their people, the honourable MP for Shortlands Islands and the MP for Mbaegu/Asifola.

As has been said and as we have all know, this meeting was convene mainly to pass the 2011 Appropriation Bill so that the Government could expend and collect economic resources that are carried in the estimates for this year. And pass this budget we did. An important part of the passage of this budget was the debate that preceded its actual passing. Like any other

budgets, this budget was brought here so that members of this House could contribute to it through their debates. This is where members of Parliament make their contribution to the budget, just like any other budgets; we make our contributions on the floor of Parliament, and that is provided for in our budgeting process. I was therefore not impressed when my good friend, the Minister of Finance and Treasury tried to take this side of the House to task over the contributions we made to the budget. I was not impressed about that. He could just simply reject them or do whatever he wanted, but I do not think he should have taken us to task over what we say. But perhaps what we must not encourage was the manner in which the government responded to some of the comments, especially the comment by the member for North West New Georgia. I think he made some points that were valid when he said that as the leader of SIPRA, who is, as you know, Sir, is on this side of the House and the President is on that side of the House and they seemed to have strong disagreements on the treatment of funding assistance to the New Georgia Forestry project. But as you know whether they disagreed because one is on the other side and the tail or the head is on this side, I am not sure, but all the political parties in this Parliament House are all heads and tail everywhere ...

(laughter)

except for the Liberal because he is only one and he has become our Leader of Opposition, and so lucky. But all our parties in here are all split; the democratic heads are there, some over here. The PCP used to be not split but I think it must have split now. I do not know where the head is but it has spilt, it is doing the same thing as the other parties, and so I am not sure. But I think that is where the problem lies, they are all split. Before the election we came together as soul mates talking about big plans when we come here, we see no opportunity in this Parliament, we also queue up for jobs. After we won the election we thought we have big jobs and so we came queuing up for jobs too here inside Parliament, where are we going to get another big job. And I think that is what contributed to the splitting of parties.

There is no point talking about splitting parties if we continue to talking about it. It is being hypocritical for us to think that we should pursue party system because, in my opinion, if we are going to pursue party system we must start the commitment now. We must commit to party system if this is going to work. It is not going to work if we rely on legislation to do it because we will find some other ways of going around legislation.

Having commented on this issue, I find it unfair that some of the Ministers to have gone back to sine die and talk about issues and bills that we have talked about. Because I understand that we have time to debate these things. Why did you not contribute to those issues during the debate so that we can respond? When you stand and give your opinions about your ministry, we are left with no option as we do not have the opportunity to respond to some of the comments you have raised. I think there should be some restrictions. Your Chairman of the House Committee will support you and put something so that when bills are passed it should not be talked about. Just like the Minister for Education who talked about the motion, which you have made your ruling on. There is no need to cause some more strong feelings about an issue that is water under the bridge.

I find this sine die motion a very nice motion because it gives us the opportunity to talk about other issues. This country is not made up of this government, this country is made up of many things; and there are many things that are also going wrong outside. We should have freedom through this motion to express some opinions. And I will be expressing some opinions on one of the issues that I love to talk about, and which I continue to talk about in the last parliament, and that is fuel supplies to this country. I like it because this country will stop if fuel supplies do not come in. That is how serious this fuel thing is. My Minister for Finance knows this very well because we started together. And when we talk about fuel we tried relocating the fuel depots here but it did not work out. Now that we are both big people in this Parliament I think we should work together to relocate the fuel supplies. We managed to relocate LPG up to Ranadi during our time.

In Parliament I expressed a lot of reservations about the operation agreement that was in place, and as you know it turned out a few months later a lot of things were not working well. So I was not just making noises in here. But as we speak the South Pacific Oil is in the process of completing another fuel tank in the current depot down town. The tank, I believe, is going to be about 3,500,000 litres; the capacity of that tank. And as you know there is no space in that area and so what it means is, with that new tank the total capacity of that depot is about 15,000,000 litres. There is not going to be anymore tank, that place is running out of space. What that means is that the South Pacific Oil Limited will have to manage this volume in order to cater for our fuel needs in the next few years. There will come a time when managing that capacity will not be possible and then it would have to build some more tanks somewhere. The cost of doing that in the future is going to be very, very high and that is why the need to start thinking about relocating them becomes pressing.

You would also note that just next to the fuel tank depots, the SPO is building a service station. First all, let me just say that I am appalled that the city planners had allowed the South Pacific Oil to build that service station on where it is. I just do not understand how our city planners can approve construction of that depot in that particular place. That place is access to the Ports area, and the Ports Authority had already expressed a lot of concerns about that facility, the fuel station. I suspected that it may have been built without proper consultations.

One of the concerns we have over that fuel depot is the risk of fire. A lot of people upon seeing the fuel depots talk about fire. But let me just say that the fuel depots and fire stations carry their own fire risks. The addition of a new service station to the fuel depots, therefore, increases the propensity of the entire area to fire. I say this knowing that the South Pacific fuel oil depot is very safe. But safe this may be there is a big tank of fresh water located just next to the fuel station just in case there is a fire.

Mr Speaker, I have a Class 2 certificate in fire fighting, which I obtained from ESOL Fire Training School in Melbourne and so I know how to fight a fire. I have second certificate, the lowest is class 5. I have class 2, just one more class before I become a specialist in fire fighting. In a situation when one of the tanks in the South Pacific Oil depot somehow catches fire, every single tank there will have to be treated as if they are on fire. The implication here is that the more tanks there are, the more difficult it becomes to prevent a fire catastrophe should it arises. That is the implication of the tanks that are being built in the depot. Building a petrol station next to it just increases the difficulty of controlling a fire should a fire happen there. But it

would be interesting to see how that fuel station operates because as you know it is a retail station. The marketing of fuel here is in two parts; the Minister of Finance knows it, one is wholesale and another one which is mostly sold on contract prices, another volume part of the market is sold in retail prices. Retail price has a mark up to it, which allows retailers to continue marketing fuel in their outlets. The fuel station sitting next to the depot, I do not know how fuel will get in there. But it will not justify SPO selling its fuel at retail prices. It would have to sell it under retail prices, which means it will make that place congested. Now as it is, traffic is very bad in that place. If the South Pacific Oil were to sell its fuel under retail price, that place is going to be congested, it is going to be very bad for the traffic. It might also bust the other service stations because they will simply not compete. I hope my friends at the SP Oil are not angry with me on what I am saying because I am just raising some of my concerns as a Class 2 certificate fire-fighter.

I have said enough about the SP Oil. It is doing a great job in supplying fuel and we should encourage it, but at the same time we should encourage it to try and think about relocating the fuel depot because the rate it is going now looks like it will not move out quickly.

Just two other issues that I would like to mention, and one of them is shipping. I want to touch on this because our local shipping owners are very concerned right now. The way things are going in terms of the transport sector development fund, most of our locals are being affected. In saying this we also contribute to the passage of this fund last year. The requirements are so stringent that our local shipping owners are being kept out, expatriates are coming in and I have the feeling that they are being given priority treatment, despite of the fact that our local owners have served this country for the last many years.

I will just about to close by touching on the NPF funds. The funding has been used too for Sasape Mariner and so I would like them to hurry up and finish that facility. Because when the Sasape was not operating like the other facilities that are operational right now, it is really killing the shipping. It is really killing them, and so if the Sasape project could come on stream and take some of the difficulties that our ships are facing right now. I say this to those people who are supervising our NPF funds that there seems to be a lot of activities going on about that fund and so I want you to please look after it properly otherwise some people come and siphon it out. I will stop here.

Sir, I once again want to thank you for giving me this opportunity. I would like to apologize if I have said something that may have hurt somebody during our debates. Sorry, I did not mean to do that, but this is the place we can make those comments. It was not meant to be personal, no hard feelings about, and so we leave it here. I feel particularly bad about the Minister of Works because I have said something that may have hurt him, but he must be assured that I helped him get that contract as well. In here I am just making some comments but let us leave it all behind here so that when we go out we look forward to the release of funds. Because as you know when our people come asking us for money and looking for projects we tell them that the budget is not yet passed, and that is a very good excuse. Now our people know that the budget is passed so please Mr Minister releases the moneys because we have no excuse now.

Again like the others, I would like to take this opportunity to say hello to my people for their support. I will come and visit you and I look forward to working with you putting in

some more projects. In terms of lighting we are not worried about it because we have been lighted for a long time. Welcome to the solar light world as the rest of you. With those comments I support the motion.

Mr HOUNIPWELA (*MP Small Malaita*): Thank you for according me this opportunity to speak to the motion of sine die moved by the honourable Prime Minister.

First of all, I would like to thank the honourable Prime Minister and the Government for taking us through this second meeting of the Ninth Parliament. As the PM said when moving this motion, it has not been an easy time for him as Prime Minister and leader of the executive government and he expressed it this way that just recently he has been relieved of this situation because for the past six months or so there has been instability in government and also in Parliament. That is what he said, and now I want to tell him that he can be assured the government is going to be stable.

During this meeting, as has been expressed by others before me, we have passed important legislations, the 2011 Appropriation Bill and the 2010 Supplementary Appropriation Bill 2011 and also amendments to the Standing Orders for establishment of three parliamentary standing select committees.

I only want to make a small comment on the 2011 Appropriation. And some of the comments I am going to say here were already made very, very clearly to us by the honourable colleague for East Choiseul. I would like to make some comments on where we should be investing or as it were, emphasizing our investment plans to resuscitate economic growth in our country. And I think we should be looking at the productive sector. I think there are three main areas I would like to emphasize. Firstly in agriculture which also includes forestry, and the Minister has told us that the KFPL is now in good hands or a good investor or partner has come in to invest in that sector and so that is a good sign. But I think the focus of agriculture probably at the moment should be on three crops plantation on things like cocoa, coconut, oil palm, coffee.

I am saying this because there is vast investment already on the ground on these areas. And another thing too is that the investment on those is wide spread and so the economic benefits of investments in those areas will reach many of us, and I think the impact can be quite immediate. That is why I think it is good and it makes sense for us to invest in the area of agriculture.

Another area, which I think is also in the government's policy and investment program is to encourage tourism, especially eco-tourism because I do not think we can compete with countries like Fiji, Tahiti and places like that. We need to target a different market from those places. This industry has the potential for quick returns to our people. Again, it is one that employs a lot of people and it can address a lot of our population in terms of their locations across the country.

Thirdly and the last area that I think we should exploit investment on is minerals. I think the potential in this sector is enormous, as we expect the reopening of the Gold Ridge mine. That one alone has already triggered a lot of interest in this sector in different locations throughout the country. I think if we look at triggering off growth and more economic opportunities, trigger off income levels, then that is my suggestion.

Another area we are to look at; and I was talking about the private sector earlier on, which we always refer to it as the engine for growth. But the private sector cannot grow on its own. I think the heavy lifting has to be done by government in terms of infrastructure, and the honourable member for East Kwaio has talked already about infrastructure because it is one of the areas he loved so much and so he talked on it. But I think the point I would like to make is that we have to make serious investment dollars, put serious investment dollars into infrastructures - on our roads, aviation, shipping, not only buying of ships but infrastructure facilities like the honourable member for Rennell Bellona has stated, like in ship building, wharves and things like that. These things are needed because that is how we can move the economy, that is how we can generate economic activity and that is how we can make a better livelihood in our country to work because all we are looking for is economic opportunities for our people.

I think the point made by the Honourable Minister for Education and Human Resources is a good one in that leave our resources owners, our people in their own places so that they do not come to Honiara, Auki, Gizo, but remain in their places and you bring development to them and they are to carry out development in their areas. In saying that, one area I think that will help to provide the enabling environment to infrastructure, which also includes telecommunications, and I also want to echo appreciation and recognition by the member for East Kwaio for our telecommunications companies. I think within a short period of time our country is covered by telephone coverage so this is a good development, but of course there is more room for improvement.

Still on investment program, I think the government needs to double its efforts and invest on power and the energy sector. I hope the Tina hydro project and other projects in the energy sector will be realised because currently our power supplier, the SIEA and our water supplier SIWA, we are not so certain about their situation because it looks like they are a bit disable at this time; the SIEA and SIWA. I only hope that the reforms being carried out in those two institutions will come out to help them deliver on their mandate. These are two important authorities but if their current state of affairs and situation continues like this then we are going backwards. Energy is one very important area to look at in providing the enabling environment.

I think the point made by the honourable colleague MP for East Choiseul regarding legislative and regulatory environment of this country. I wholeheartedly support the point he made about if we do not prepare legislations, our programs will not work and a lot of the things we would want to implement depend on legislative program. We need legislative programs that are a bit more rigorous so that when we pursue our goals we can achieve them. We therefore need to speed up our legislative programs. If there are 41 legislations that need to be addressed, then I think we will need more time to do that taking into account the speed we are taking at this time.

I want to comment on the point about the political situation of our country in the past six months, and I am not going to repeat what the honourable Prime Minister has already said but just to acknowledge it. Also, the point made by the honourable Minister of Finance about instability inside government, inside Parliament and inside the country. When the political situation in the country is uncertain and unstable as has been in the last six months, it is not

good for us. It is not only good for the government but also not good for every one of us; it is not good for this country, and it is not good to continue with it at this point in time. That is why I want to say that I appreciate the comments made in the media in recent days regarding me and my colleagues whom we have moved to join the NCRA Government. I, for example, no one asked me to join the government. I decided on that on my own. But most importantly this is something that I made from the choice of my representatives. I did not make this alone. In fact I received their counsel way before on this matter, they have already provided me with counsel on this issue. In fact it was when I went over that some just sent in their congratulatory messages and best wishes to me for making the right move. That is what they told me. While I appreciate those comments, I have made up my mind as to whether I will go with public opinion expressed in the media or I go along with those who placed me here. So I have taken the liberty to say that I will stand with my voters and supporters whom I represent in here. That is a clarification I want to make on this issue.

On the subject of constituents, I am happy that my request late last year for Parliament's civic group to go to my constituency has been approved by your office, Mr Speaker. The briefing I have received and the staff have been very eloquent in their briefing for me. I want to say

Hon Philip: It is now 4:30pm and it seems that a number of people would still wish to speak on the motion, and so I would like to ask your concurrence, Sir, to suspend Standing Order 10 with Standing Order 81 to permit the continuation of the debate until adjourn by yourself, sir, in accordance with Standing Order 10(5)

Mr Speaker: Permission is granted. I put the question. The question is that standing order 10 be suspended in accordance with Standing Order 81 to permit the continuation of the business of the House until adjourned by the Speaker in accordance with standing order 10(5)

Motion agreed to and Standing Order 10(5) stands suspended at 4.30pm

Mr Hounipwela: Thank you Mr Prime Minister for requesting that Parliament suspends standing order to allow other colleagues and myself to continue debating the sine die motion.

I was commenting on the parliamentary civic group that is going to visit my constituency. The briefing I was given seems to me like it is going to be a very nice program for at least three reasons. Firstly, when they go there they will, as it were, showcase Parliament, its role and what Parliament is about. I think it is important that we take parliament staff to our rural areas to inform our people about Parliament. Most of our people have less knowledge about parliament, children especially including adults too. Therefore, I think it is very important that we allow the civic education program to go ahead and inform our public and the rural population about the role of Parliament and also would be an opportunity for our people to interact with our parliamentary staff. It is very important.

Secondly, it would be also an opportunity for the Parliament staff to explain to our people what our roles as parliament members are because some of us may have explained our

roles quite differently to our constituents and our rural people. Therefore, let us allow our parliamentary staff to go and inform our people the role of a Member of Parliament. I think this is very healthy, and which leads to my third reason why I think this reason is important that if they go and explain it so that when the elections come our people will know who to vote for. I am sure you all will come back if the Parliament Civic group go and explain your role down there. This is why I want to encourage all my colleague Members of Parliament to invite this group to go to your constituencies and inform our people. You would not need to campaign after all because they will do it for you.

If you are thinking of running for the 2014 elections, like me, then please I encourage you to invite the civic group of Parliament to go to your constituencies and do this work. In my case, preparations are very advanced and it looks like they will go next month. And I am hoping, Mr Speaker, that you will be free sometime so that you are involved in one segment of the program. I know this will be very good for my people in Small Malaita.

I want to join others in congratulating a number of people. I also would like to join other colleagues that have congratulated our two new colleagues, the honourable for Shortlands and the honourable Member for Mbaegu/Asifola constituency for winning the elections. Welcome colleagues, it is a very big work, but on behalf of my people, we would like to congratulate you and also wish you and your people best wishes for the next three and half years.

I would like to also register my thanks to acknowledge the assistance and support of our development partners. These countries and multilateral partners are helping us in trying to bring development to our people and raise the living standards of our people, especially those in the rural areas. I want to extend my thanks to them at this time, especially countries that have resident missions and offices here in Solomon Islands. We greatly value your continued dialogue and engagement with our government in our development aspirations.

The fact that our development partners are now providing direct budget support now for our country is a signal and a milestone event. I think it signifies the level of confidence that the international community has in how we are managing public finance in Solomon Islands. This is a very big achievement and I want to commend the government, especially past governments for laying the foundations for this to happen. Like the honourable Minister for Finance has stated earlier today, already a number of our neighbouring countries are looking at this example. We must try our best to work hard on this because one of the dangers or risks in this is complacency and taking things for granted sometimes. I would like to urge the government and want to see that the reforms agenda continue to further enhance and improve good governance, accountability and transparency.

Allow me to express my message of sympathy, which I want to mention it here because earlier on when Parliament discussed the three motions to express sympathy to three of our loyal development partners namely, Australia, Japan and New Zealand, I was not here because I was sick. Therefore, now I would like to take this opportunity to express on behalf of my people of Small Malaita that we join other colleagues and their constituents to express our sympathy to our good people in Australia, especially those in Queensland, those in Japan and the city of Christchurch in New Zealand.

The destruction and loss of properties and lives in natural disasters like this cannot be expressed in words, as it is just overwhelming, to say the least. When you see pictures in the television and see pictures of what has happened, I cannot even imagine how those people, our friends in Japan, Australia and New Zealand have been able to come through. It is hard to explain this. But natural disasters as they are do occur. And so I just hope and pray that these unfortunate events that have caused so much damage, misery, suffering and loss of lives to our friends, I hope those unfortunate events will not overshadow, will not dampen the zeal and the resilience that those countries have to rebuild their lives again after these disasters.

I have to also thank my good friend, the now Leader of the Opposition. I want to thank him for the short time I have been with him. Now I want to congratulate him because when we voted for him I did not congratulate him, and so I am congratulating him now. I believe that with his past and vast experience in the area of leadership and serving his second term in Parliament, the honourable Member brings to that office a vast wealth of experience to enhance the role of that office, a very important office. I also thank his deputy and the other colleagues of the group, which I am sure they will bring new inspiration and vigour to the office of the Leader of Opposition.

We continue to remind ourselves that Parliament cannot perform its proper role without a strong opposition. Whilst the opposition group is few in number, the experience and the quality of the current team will augur very well with those expectations.

In closing, I would like to say my thank you and appreciation to everyone who have worked directly and indirectly in facilitating this second meeting of the Ninth Parliament. Firstly, I would like to thank the Prime Minister, his Ministers and also the officials who have worked very hard, especially in preparing the 2011 budget. The officials that appeared before the Public Accounts Committee, I would like to acknowledge and express my appreciation for their attendance. Some who have not been able to attend, I hope that next time when the Public Accounts Committee or any of the standing committees invite them to come that they do show up.

I would like to reiterate the point made by the honourable colleague Member for East Chouseul that there has to be a way of making officials or anyone for that matter who is required to appear before committees that they actually turn up. I think it something we need to look at again, because parliamentary select committees are committees of Parliament, and so if officials and people do not turn up for hearings it weakens the work of the committees. And so I would like to re-emphasize the call that this needs to be looked at or maybe make it incumbent. I think if need be discipline has to be applied on people who do not turn up at committee hearings.

I would also like to thank the secretariats, and in our case the Auditor General, the staff and Clerk of Parliament for helping us during our deliberations and also reporting of the Public Accounts Committee. I would also like to thank the office of the Clerk and her Deputy for facilitating every meeting in this Chamber. I also thank the auxiliary staffs, the ladies that bring waters into the chamber and making sure that all our chairs and tables are clean. I would like to express my appreciation to them. I also thank the securities, the drivers and others that have facilitated the work of the committee to run smoothly.

Lastly, but not the least I would like to express my appreciation to yourself, Sir, for guiding the discussions. It is very hard for me to match your stamina, sitting down there in all

our meetings. I am surprised that you are up there, determining when the meeting is going to finish before you leave the chamber. Personally, such determination to sit long as you did is a bit hard for me, and that is why I am commending you, Sir, for that work.

Finally, I would like to give my appreciation to my people of Small Malaita. I am not campaigning here but now it is time to give them an Easter message. My best wishes to all of you my people at this Easter period. I know some of you are making Easter Conventions in various places in our constituency and so I want to send you my best wishes.

Also, to all my colleague members, I hope that you will spend this Easter period in a meaningful, fruitful and in a way that will be good not only for the issues that we are discussing here, but also use our time for the benefit of our people. With those I want to say that I support the motion and I take my seat.

Mr LAORE (*Shortlands*): Before I start I would like to thank the Prime Minister for the motion of sine die. I am very happy to be standing here today. I would like to thank and acknowledge the NCRA Government for the support given to our people through the National Parliament during the passing away of my late brother, Steve Eresi Laore. Your support has been very big and I would like to thank you for that. I think he has paved the way for me to enter Parliament.

I would like to also thank my people of Shortlands who have supported late Steve and also still have the same support for me. I thank you all and I will work with you for the next three and half years to try and develop our constituency. I would like to also acknowledge and thank the former member for Shortlands Constituency, Augustine Taneko for his leadership in the last two terms. Thank you very much for the work you have done for the people of Shortlands.

I do not have any issue for now, but the only thing I would like to ask the NCRA Government, and I would be very happy about is if the NCRA government could seriously consider the Shortlands being situated along the borders of Solomons/PNG as a special need area of Solomon Islands, in particular for the development of my constituency's valuable resources and the general wellbeing of women and children. I ask if the Government can provide us with adequate services such as security, quarantine and custom. I think that is all I want to say at this time. Thank you once again, and with these few remarks and acknowledgement, I support the motion.

Hon. LIONEL (*Minister for Rural Development & Indigenous Affairs*): Mr Speaker, thank you indeed for allowing me to contribute briefly to this motion of sine die. To the honourable Prime Minister, I thank you for moving this motion which now marks the closure of the meeting. Sir, I also would like to thank you for your fine leadership in ensuring the House is always in order and bearing with us during the meetings. I extend words of thanks to the Clerk and the entire staff of the Parliament office for their hard work and efforts in overseeing the welfare of the meetings and also the welfare of us Members of Parliament.

As a new MP, it is a privilege to hear and learn from a lot of valuable discussions from the Opposition Bench and I thank all of you, the Leader of opposition and honourable colleagues in the opposition side for actively playing your role in discussions of very important issues of this nation and our people during the meeting. After all, I believe that it is through the

exchange and sharing of views that we as leaders continue to contribute positively to improving and strengthening the welfare of our beloved country and people. To my honourable colleague Ministers and colleague Members I thank you for contributing to discussions. I also thank the hardworking Permanent Secretaries and officers of ministries for working hard to ensure ministers too are properly equipped with the right information at all times during the discussions. But above all, I will not hesitate to thank God for His guidance, wisdom and knowledge passed on upon each of us during the meetings in past days that today we are able to see a smooth and fine end to this first important meeting of Parliament this year 2011, especially in passing the 2011 Budget for continuity of goods and services to our people.

By way of contributing to this motion, I would like to make statements on behalf of the Ministry which I am responsible for. Without access to social services, without peace, without law, order and security, without access to financial and economic services, without strengthening institutions that empower the capability of our people, without strengthening relations and links with others and so forth, rural development is far from reach or in other words we will not see, feel and reach any true development. That is my area of concern as the Minister of Rural Development. It is therefore important for us to realise and to be reminded of the roles and responsibilities that each and every one of us, be it the government, the NGOs, the private sector, community groups and individuals play in developing our nation. This brings the need for serious considerations to ensure effective coordination of development activities is in place so that at the end the impact of development assistance through funding can be measured.

My Ministry, in consideration and also in line with policy 5.1.10 on central national information database, is building up a database system that will begin to see information and data of all constituencies through their constituency profiles as well as to properly record development projects of the Ministry. It is also expected that development projects of other ministries and other stakeholders are inputted into the ministry's database system as time goes on. I believe by doing this, the Ministry of Rural Development can contribute to make quality decisions on planning and development for this nation and our people.

As the name of the ministry itself says that it is the Ministry of Rural Development, it is only right that it must be properly equipped with information and data. Eventually, the area of effective coordination of development activities in the rural areas within the government machinery will happen. As we are aware, this year the Ministry has a development budget of \$103million, and this money is for all the constituencies, and this is a lot of money. In addition, funding that lies on other line ministries and other development stakeholders. NCRA is about reforms and so inline with this, the Ministry is strengthening the mechanisms in place of funding made available to ensure good governance is promoted, so that again in the end the impact of this development assistance is seen and felt by our people.

I would like to share that I attended a leadership course in Seoul, Korea in February this year for a week and also had the privilege to visit one of the successful rural development initiatives by the government of Korea and its people in the 1950s, and it is from this simple development initiative that Korea has become what it is today, a developed nation. The Korean Rural Development initiative known as the "Samal Kundong" movement or the new village movement is simply, first, the people of a particular community undergo training holistically

that eventually prepares each and everyone in the community to develop their community. The government gave support through project materials and the people themselves having prepared holistically to develop their community did not depend on others, however, build their infrastructure developments, social services and other important developments economically.

The new village movement is relevant to our setting as I see it, given that the people of our nation fully appreciate and prepare to fully grasp the need to develop and bring the standard of living to a higher level. I believe the government and other development stakeholders, like donors have done their part in making available development projects and programs. In saying this, we leaders and people of this nation need to fully commit ourselves to see improvements and changes happen and then we will gradually develop our nation.

Lastly, my Ministry is working on effective monitoring and evaluation of development projects. However, as I have mentioned earlier, any monitoring and evaluation system to be effective has to be backed up with an effective data base system, which the Ministry is working on now as one of the policy object contained in the Ministry's Annual Plan 2011.

Before I take my seat, as the minister for rural development and Member for my good people of South Vella Lavella constituency, I would like to wish all development stake holders and my good people of South Vella La Vella, happy Easter celebrations and thank you all for your continuous support and looking forward to working with you all this year and always. With these few remarks I support the motion.

Mr. MANENIARU (*MP West Are Are*: Thank you for giving this opportunity to the member for West Are Are to also contribute very briefly to this very important motion of sine die moved by the Prime Minister. I will be very brief and I just want to take this opportunity to express my gratitude and thank you on behalf of my people of West Are Are to a number of people and organizations.

First, I want to thank the honourable Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister, Cabinet Ministers, backbenchers, political appointees, the public servants and the SOEs for the work they been doing in preparing the Appropriation Bill 2011 which we have passed. It was not an easy task and I would like to congratulate the NCRA Government for successfully tabling this historical, credible and surplus budget 2011. This is a remarkable and a historical achievement which the NCRA Government has taken and so I must commend you for that. Therefore, on behalf of my people of West Are Are constituency congratulate you for this splendid achievement.

I would also like to join other colleague members of Parliament who have already spoken to endorse the statement that comes with the budget that it is for the people. And I positively believe that the budget belongs to the people of Solomon Islands. The budget carries a lot of promises which our people are looking forward to, and since it is a sustainable and a surplus budget, I fully support it. I believe it will deliver what it promises to our people throughout the country.

Mr Speaker, I also on behalf of my people sincerely congratulate you for your able and successful leadership over the first budget meeting of this Ninth Parliament, the first you have guided in your capacity as the newly elected Speaker of Parliament. Thank you for guiding us.

You have the experience and ability which makes our meeting to be very peaceful and enjoyable, especially for me as a new comer to this Chamber.

On the same note, I also want to thank the Clerk of National Parliament and her staff for the support and the tireless efforts they have been giving at this second meeting of Parliament, which is concluding very successfully. We have passed the 2011 Appropriation Bill, the 2010 Supplementary Bill (No.2), and four other important motions we have debated and passed in this Honourable Chamber.

I also want to take this opportunity to thank all colleague MPs on the Opposition and the Independent Group of the House for their sincere exercise of their responsibility as leaders in debating bills and motions that the Government brings to this Honourable House. I thank colleague leaders for the bipartisan responsibility possibly demonstrated in this Chamber in the process of analysing and constructively debating motions and in particular the 2010 Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.2) 2011 and the 2011 Budget. It is the people's budget and this House is responsible for what it has done within our capacity.

I also want to take this opportunity to thank the media, the SIBC that enable my people of West Are Are and also rural people throughout Solomon Islands to connect to our meetings. I also want to thank One News that enabled our debates and discussions going on here to be televised in homes here in Honiara as well as the urban centres. This is what democracy is all about. This is the parliament of the people and they must access it, and so I want to thank One News in that regards. I also acknowledge our newspapers for writing articles and also sharing issues during our debates. I want to thank people for carrying out the responsibility of ensuring our people know what is happening inside this House as this is the people's parliament.

I also want to take this opportunity to thank the churches and the people of Solomon Islands. We are sitting down here as leaders, and every time Christian people throughout our country are praying for us to have wisdom from God to carry out our leadership role because without God we cannot do the work right. And so I want to thank our churches, church leaders and Christian people of Solomon Islands for their prayers, especially for this second meeting that is going to end today. I believe we have been guided by the Holy Spirit hence what we have achieved at this meeting.

Allow me also on behalf of my people of West Are Are constituency to sincerely congratulate our two newly MPs for Mbaegu/Asifola and Shortlands. Congratulations and welcome on board, you are the choice of your people and they have entrusted you with their livelihoods as their MPs of the Parliament. I wish you God's blessing in your endeavours and service to your people.

I want to comment a bit on the budget, and again I congratulate the NCRA Government as this is a very positive budget that will bring a lot of changes to our people. Since the Budget is passed and it is history in the making, which I believe will translate tangibly and meaningfully to the lives of our rural people and also for my people in the West Are Are constituency. As the Budget theme emphasizes Rural Livelihood and Sustainability, this is not a small thing but it is the lives of people. This Budget is also in the hands of the 50 Members in this honourable Chamber.

With this, I would like to challenge us that we make a difference in the lives of the needy and marginalized citizens of this country whom you and I represent in this Chamber. Our

people in the remote rural areas throughout this country are listening to us. They are listening to the promises we have made and it is up to us to deliver what we have promised in this Honourable Chamber through our statements. This budget is ours, it is our budget, we are the government and we must ensure that we deliver the goods and services to our people.

Now that we have passed the budget I would like to urge the ministries that are going to implement it, and I would now like to comment on a few of the ministries. On the Ministry of Health and Medical Services, many of our people in the remote areas have not been receiving medicines because they are very far from clinics. We are talking about big money in here when they just simply need tablets. They do not even have chloroquines and panadol. If you live in areas that are so fortunate, representing a constituency of people who have access to medicine, I want you to come to our place, come to West Are Are where I will take you to the highlands and mountains of West Are Are where you would see and appreciate how far they are from these services. And so I just want us to deliver medicines to them. But how are we going to do it? We must take action right now and not just talk about money on paper. We have to make sure to deliver goods and services to our people.

It would be really good and I urge the Ministry to look into establishing clinics and aid posts because that would have access to funds from our multilateral and bilateral partners. Why can we not talk with them and put it through our provincial government, our agents so that they put up such facilities for our people. The provinces cannot do anything hence neglecting an urgent need of our people, especially medical services. I urge our government since we have the money, we have the budget, we have the backup, let us go straight to our people, especially those that live very far away and need the much needed services.

I would now like to touch on the Ministry of Infrastructure and Development. There is a lot of money there, the infrastructure fund. As was highlighted and emphasized by earlier speakers, it is only through roads and wharves that we connect with our people and their livelihood will be fine. I would like my hard working colleague Minister to take note of this. Let us build infrastructures throughout this country so that our people can start to see life. I know they are capable of making life because they have the resources, and it is up to us to enable them and that is why we have a budget and we have the resources.

I also would like to touch on the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock. Those of us who come from places that rely mostly on copra, just recently when the price of copra goes up to \$7 and \$8 everyone was crazy about copra. Plantations are now no longer covered in bushes. But as the price went down to \$4 and is still going down now what is the government doing about this? As the honourable Member for Small Malaita mentioned, money from copra is the only money that reaches many of our people in the rural areas. I think that is where we should put our focus on. I urge the Government to redirect its thinking and attention on areas that will make immediate impact on the lives and livelihood of our people.

I want to thank the honourable Minister of Forestry and Research for assuring us that there is funding that continues to encourage downstream processing. This has still not worked out for us as yet, as raised by the Minister. But this is a good project for our people. If you go to Ranadi you would see people bringing in cubic of timbers. What do they cut those timbers with? Well, they hired chainsaws.

I really support you, honourable Minister, you are really doing good for our people. The 50 constituencies, if they have equal share, the better so that they can go ahead. If we just sit down and simply look at their logs and their forests being reaped and raped at the rate we do not want and appreciate. If we give chainsaws to them they will mill their forests and sell it. Honourable Minister, I am wholeheartedly behind you on this and will support you in that program so that our people can get money out of their own logs rather than selling them to the logging companies.

I want to touch on some urgent problems in my constituency of West Are Are in regards to the environment. And I thank the Minister who is looking at me right now and is smiling. I think six of my villages for almost five months of the year are usually under the sea. If you go to those villages, especially in November, December, January, you will paddle from one house to the other; you will have to paddle. If you think I am not telling the truth, go and see it for yourselves.

What I would like to say, and the Minister has already taken note when we discussed this that is it is high time that we go directly and see what the problem is. I do not want us to go and produce another thick report; an assessment report, analysing it again because already the sea is rising and houses are going underwater. What are we still looking for? Be practical and simple. It is people that we should be saving, build their homes and relocate them to the hills and mountains. That is basically what I urge the Minister to focus on rather than taking in consultants who will come up with reports after reports. To me that is unnecessary rather we have to tackle the problems head on.

I would like to thank the NCRA Government for the budget of \$2.5million for the Waisisi Oil Palm. My people initiated this project, they even hunted for the investor and they matched and married it already, and so how long should it take us. Work is progressing but I want it to be speeded up. It is an important project for our country because we want to look at what would enhance our economic activities and also our income and so we from West Are Are are ready to contribute. I want to thank the NCRA Government for that budget of \$2.5million which will sort of lift it, but I want to shorten the period. When people are ready, go and do it, otherwise they change their minds and we end up arguing. I also thank NCRA for the recognition of comparative advantage in our country, which we are also ready to support our country and our government policies in terms of development.

Allow me to speak very briefly on economic growth centres, a flagship policy of the NCRA Government, which I fully endorse and support. But we want it to go directly to our people so that they would start benefitting from it. I just want to caution us here otherwise we come up with all sorts of reports. We have professionals and I really thank the NCRA Government for recognising our local expertise and consultants, but they have to act now otherwise we might end up shelving the reports. I would be very, very disappointed if nothing happens this year because there is budgetary provision for this, and it actually takes up a bulk of the budget. We have to establish even one or two economic growth centres this year. That is my strong belief on this NCRA policy and I believe since there are resources and human resources as well we are going to achieve that.

Allow me now to touch on the Solomon Islands politics. I came in as a young politician and we went through the 'Solomons politics', if I may call it, which has given me a lot of insight

and a lot of experience. First, we represent our people and I thank colleague MPs that we respect each other. I also noted that our politics has gone to certain heights and extremes as well. I worked in the public service and I have always listened to the meetings and I sort of grow old with Solomon Islands politics, which we continue to increase. There are new strategies, new attitudes and new mentality as well, and I just fear that it will continue to be costly to our people and to our country if we are not careful.

One thing I learn and I just cannot believe about our politics is the way there is continuous change. We come in as leaders, one day we say this and the next day we say the other thing and that is what is perceived to be our Solomon politics. I also learn that the influences it has on our members also compromises the integrity of Members of Parliament, and that saddens me as this is on the rise. A lot of influences is taking away the trust and integrity that our people had on us in making decisions. That is what I wanted to highlight from what I have observed.

On that note, I also challenge the NCRA Government to look at the political instability in this country. And I think it would be good to bring back the political party integrity bill at this Ninth Parliament, which you have discussed in the last house. I think our country and our people need it. I say this because no one can control the 50 members of Parliament because we always take advantage of our situation. Sometimes we say we represent our people. But we all know that we the 50 members in here, sometimes we say this and that that do not truly represent what our people mandated us to do. I believe we must learn to control ourselves and that an act of parliament is required. If the act comes into this Chamber, I will support it because I want our people to have the sense of trust on us MPs who are elected.

Lastly, I once again would like to thank you, Mr Speaker, your Deputy Speaker, the Clerk and Parliament Staff. I also would like to thank the honourable Prime Minister, Cabinet Ministers and your Backbenchers and your hard working staffs of the ministries for the splendid support they have been giving us which enabled us pass the 2011 Budget. I also want to thank our traditional donors and development partners for continuing to support this budget. Without them we would have been nothing and so on that note I want to sincerely thank them for continuing to give support to develop our people. I also want to thank the media organizations as I said earlier, SIBC, One News and our local newspapers for the active role in bringing our people closer to Parliament and its debates.

As we are now in the Easter period, I wish all of you all the blessings of Easter. May God continue to give you His guidance and bless you in your endeavours and your responsibilities. Lastly, but not the least I want on behalf of myself and my family thank my good people of West Are Are constituency for their continuous support of me as their voice in this honourable House. I can assure them that I will continue to represent their interest and I will be their voice on issues and matters of interest to them in this honourable chamber. I want to say this to my people, as they continue to monitor the petition case against me. I want to inform them that it is normal and is following its process. I believe I will be your member and your voice for the coming four years and after this meeting is ended, we are going to implement the programs we have in place where you will receive your projects, so do not worry about the petition very much. I just want to continue to encourage you my people to be at peace as it is

not easy. I want to assure my people of West Are Are that work is in progress and as soon as I finish from this Parliament meeting I will come and we will start to work on our programs.

With those remarks, once again the blessings of Easter be with all of us and you, Sir, and your family and your staff of Parliament. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this important moved by the honourable Prime Minister, and I fully support the motion.

Mr. GHIRO (*MP East Makira*): Firstly, I wish to congratulate the NCRA Government for the passage of its 2011 Appropriation Budget. It is a landmark budget which, in my opinion, if followed and implemented properly will make a difference to the lives of rural based Solomon Islanders, as well as those working and living in the urban areas. Secondly, I also wish to acknowledge the support, confidence and cooperation my people had on me in my role as their voice in the National Parliament.

Whilst congratulating the Government for its achievements, I wish to dwell on two points, which I personally see as a leader as needing full attention. It is a personal observation that since independence some leaders of the country have had a bit of different mindset about the provinces. This attitude they had has undermined the needs and the interests of other provinces. In other words, there are some provinces which our past leaders have considered as of low priority or low class and therefore have not not fairly distributed services to identified priorities. For example, my province of Makira/Ulawa is a good example of this mindset. But my province also has resources that have the potential to boost the economy of this country. A Central Bank report of a few years ago indicated that during the ethnic tension period, the Makira/Ulawa and Isabel provinces were the two that contribute to sustain the national economy. This was during the time when Guadalcanal, Malaita and Western provinces; the three leading provinces were embroiled in the ethnic tension. Despite of this great support to the country, I am sad to say the two provinces and a few others too seemed to be left out of the priorities of the government. Most big projects that have been mooted in the last 30 years until now are for the already specially treated provinces. But I can assure you that we also have potential sites that can host big projects such as growth centres, oil palm plantations and others. East Makira also has some of the best boat builders who are just sitting idle with their skills. There are also abundant resources there that can be harvested to help our economy. It is along these lines that I want to call on us leaders now to change our mindset. The mindset I have referred to is, to say the least, undermining the contribution of provinces to the national economy. If allowed to continue to be the preferred mindset by our government, then let me call for the quick reform to the government system. Maybe the low priority treatment of past governments to other provinces is a blessing in disguise because may be the resource that are there could be best left for their statehood.

I am calling on the present government to include the often considered low and laid back provinces in its important plans. I want the government to apply equitable distribution of services and resources to our provinces. There is much potential in these provinces, but if our government keeps neglecting them, the country will not benefit from those potentials. East Makira, for example, has a lot of forests, sea resources and manpower that can support the economy of Solomon Islands. But without incentives or encouragement for the province, those valuable resources will not yield anything to the economy.

The longer our government sticks to the notion that there are low class provinces, the longer our economy will become stiff and move around the same vicious cycle. Such a cycle will only make donors have a field day, but as well as we know there is no such thing as “free handouts”, and I am sure our abundant and untouched resources are being eyed by some of our donor friends or other closely allied friends. It is very important that such issues are realized so fair distribution of services and goodwill should be done. Fair distribution of services will be the way forward for a strong united and forward moving Solomon Islands.

I would have thought that the ethnic tension has taught us good lessons to improve. But personally I do not think our governments have learnt much lessons. The timing of those sad days came naturally. To me it was aching for a person reaching the age of 30 and must get really sick in order that he/she is immunized to live healthy for another 20 years. Unfortunately, for Solomon Islands, I do not think governments have done what nature requires. Instead we seem to still be living in the mindset of what has caused those sad days. I hope this is not the case with NCRA and all its plans.

I also see that there is not much discussion about two most important issues, which as far as I am concerned are culture and religion. It seems that all we talk about nowadays is money, economy and politics. But culture and religion are two critical elements in Solomon Islands that have held and continue to hold communities or tribes together. Unfortunately, this seems to be on the way out because our main concerns have changed. These two elements go hand in hand with law and order. When our people are well served by culture and religion they will easily abide to the requirements of law and order. However, since our focus and discussions have ignored these two most important elements in shaping and holding communities together, there is now very poor law and order situation in the country.

Law and order is a fundamental component that will determine a positive future for this country. Good law and order is a way forward in harnessing togetherness and respect for each other. I have seen law and order as being equal to good community fabrics. Good society fabrics equals to conducive environment for socioeconomic development, business diversification, community harmony as well as peace. When that happens, the country will have a good and vibrant economic base that will automatically broaden for the good and benefit of all Solomon Islanders now and in the future.

Let the ethnic tension period be a classic example of how bad law and order can impact on our progress both social and economical. But as I have alluded to earlier, law and order cannot thrive without strong adherence to culture and religious values. I am sorry to say that we are backsliding on these two important values in which most of us have grown up in and with. I urge us, the leaders of today to seriously look at the general declining value for culture and religion and to do something about it. It is good the country is going to host the Pacific Arts Festival next year. But let me say that let us not just use it to showcase our culture, but make sure it thrives and improve after the festival for culture and custom make us unique and special people in this world. All Solomon Islanders, therefore, should make an effort to value and strengthen culture and custom to ensure our future generations do not become copycats and promoters of other cultures and values.

I am very sorry to say that this is already happening today. Just listen to our own music, watch the music video clips produced by local bands, a dance mimicking black American

singers, not dressed in traditional dancing costumes to show they are proud of what and where they come from. I am happy that the Government is going to soon introduce language teaching in primary schools. This is but only a small beginning. Let us ensure there is more about us as Solomon Islanders, a special and unique people in the wide world, is included in the national curriculum. This, I am sure, will make us love, cherish and be proud of our cultures and customs. Culture to me is unique and itself an attraction for people in other countries. Let us ensure that we respect values and cherish them for the benefit now and those of our children in the future.

With those, let me thank you once again, Mr Speaker and the Parliament staff for your hard work in ensuring things are ready for us to use every day during the course of this meeting. Let me also thank the NCRA Government for coming up with a good budget. Let me also thank all Members of Parliament for seeing the importance of passing the budget for its implementation. Finally, but not the least, let me thank and acknowledge once again the voters of East Makira for trusting and having confidence in me. I am thankful and humble by your good thoughts and support. Together we will strive to ensure our constituency becomes a strong contributor to the welfare of Solomon Islands and in the end will also make us become better culturally, spiritually and mentally. With these few remarks, thank you once again and I support the motion.

Mr SILAS TAUSINGA (*West New Georgia/Vona Vona*): Thank you for giving me this opportunity to contribute to the motion of sine die. I would also like to thank the honourable Prime Minister for moving this very important motion. On that note, I would also like to congratulate the two new Members that have been successfully voted into this Ninth Parliament. On that note, I would also like to congratulate the Minister of Finance and his staff for their hard work in preparing the 2011 Appropriation Bill 2011 passed at this second meeting of Parliament.

Being a first timer in Parliament and the youngest in this current House, I would first of all like to thank my constituency of West New Georgia /Vona Vona for the faith and confidence they have in me as their parliamentary representative, a solemn responsibility that I do not take lightly. Indeed, this second meeting of Parliament has been challenging, but with the help of the Almighty and the understanding of my good constituents, I have sailed through and I am optimistic that with this continued guidance and support of my constituents, I will fulfil my parliamentary obligations for the betterment of my constituency and our wonderful islands.

As we all know, the priority of the government in this second meeting of this Ninth Parliament is the 2011 Appropriation Bill 2011 passed by this honourable House on Monday.

I shall be very brief just putting across two or three points to the Government for its consideration. First of all, I would like to urge the government to seriously look at overhauling our education system, which resulted in the dramatic increase in school drop outs. I believe it is time that the government introduces a compulsory and employment focus training for children from primary up to secondary school levels to vocational training centres to ensure they are well equipped with the knowledge and skills to be self-reliant. Youth issue is a big concern and a growing concern.

Youth issues is a concern to me as far as the 2011 Budget is concerned. It is surprising that the NCRA Government has seen it fit to commit quite a substantial amount of money for the establishment of a National Sports Stadium, and yet overlooks the importance of strengthening youth participation in sports of which the stadium will be meaningless. The establishment of youth recreation centres in provinces should be the prime focus of the government. I believe a lot of youths engage in criminal activities because of boredom and so the provision of recreational centres would allow young people to occupy themselves in worthwhile activities. I am certain this will have a great impact on efforts to reduce the crime rate.

I would also like to register my deep appreciation for the kind gesture by the NCRA Government for allocating funds in the 2011 budget for the Noro Industrial Housing Estate. However, I think the Government should go a little further by improving infrastructures in very important economic zones in the country. I will be expecting a further allocation for the upgrading of the Noro/Munda road, which is vital to boosting economic activities there. I believe the government should concentrate utilizing the Noro International Port to reach its full potential.

Hon Agovaka (*interjecting*): Come over to this side and join the government and we will do it for you.

Mr Tausinga: It is okay, I will sit on this side as of now. I would also like to take this opportunity lastly to express my heartfelt condolence on behalf of my family and constituents to the government and the people of New Zealand for the loss of lives and other valuable properties from the earthquake that struck the city of Christchurch on 22nd February this year. Also, the same to the government and the people of Japan for the destruction and loss of lives and properties by the earthquake triggered tsunami that struck the country recently. I am sure that the good people of these two great countries are aware of our financial constraints to assist in any big way towards relief efforts, but we will keep you supported in your bereavement and recovery efforts in our prayers. I believe that the determined spirit of New Zealand and Japanese to rise above the challenges will ensure a speedy recovery for them as proven from past calamities that struck these two great nations.

In concluding, I support the motion and I wish all my colleagues the best until we meet again in this honourable House.

Hon JOHN MOFFAT FUGUI (*Minister of Environment*): I rise to contribute to this Sine Die Motion before this Honourable House today. I stand to congratulate the NCRA Government for the successful passage of its first budget after assuming leadership of this country eight months on. This is a huge success that comes with a big budget of \$2.2billion. Of course, this is positive commentary on the leadership of the Prime Minister with the able mateship of the Minister of Finance, and that is why it is important the Minister of Finance is here when we give him accolades.

In the person of the Minister of Finance, we have an individual who in more than one instance has walked on knife-edge, so to speak. I have personally witnessed the Minister's

creativity and skilful manoeuvrings, especially where public finances and economy are concerned, a feat that few of us could achieve or even dare to attempt. The country needs a few or more of these fearless individuals as national leaders.

I now turn to the importance of national budget because the meeting is centrally focused on the national budget. Many of our people who have listened to the parliamentary proceedings over the radio or watch these sessions on TV might find the experience interesting, satisfying, amusing, if not mystifying. But this is not surprising, public budgeting in itself is a mystery to most people, even for professionals who work in the government. The importance of budgeting cannot be emphasized enough.

There is more than one reason why government budgets are important, and I will enumerate two of these reasons. The main purpose of public budgeting is accountability. Accountability occurs when our people hold us, their MPs and leaders accountable through the electoral process every four years. In a similar fashion, in terms of the national budget, Parliament holds government ministries and government departments accountable by reviewing their budgets, setting their estimates at appropriate levels, and I think these ministries and departments know how the people want their moneys to be spent. This is done on the floor of Parliament where only Members can participate and account for their actions, inactions and intentions. So this is an example of direct public accountability.

But the most important single reason for our budget is control. Left to themselves, government ministries and departments would over spend public moneys. Therefore, there is a need for adequate control spending. The case of Solomon Islands makes the reason for control more poignant. Even where control mechanisms are in place, government ministries and departments still overspend by ways of contingency warrants, advances and even overrides. This is why it is good our people either tune in on SIBC broadcasts or watch the proceedings on TV One when Parliament deliberates on the country's annual budget or national budget. On that score, I personally would like to encourage Parliament to allow as many members of the public as possible to come and fill the seats in the gallery when parliament is in session. By doing this, we enlarge democracy and allow our people to see, watch and know firsthand the parliamentary processes. This would cause the government or parliament relatively little to do just this.

I want to speak a little on constituency budget, not national budget but constituency budgets. Along similar line of thinking, I would like to touch briefly on constituency budgets, constituency budgets and not the national budget. Again, this requires the Government, especially its managers - permanent secretaries and their accountants to remain innovative. One of the ways to be innovative is to bring constituency budgets into our national budgetary process.

When you study our national budget and the budgetary process, what stands starkly clear is that every budget we pass in this honourable House is in the main ministerial and/or departmental budgets. We particularly, especially the Ministry of Finance have very few inputs from the constituencies per se or so to speak. This is due largely to the very nature of the government processes including its budgetary processes. It is the practice and the behaviour of governments to standardize all constituencies as though they are one or the same. This is good for convenience of processing but it also left out so much to be done. This is despite of

constituency differences, priorities, programs and projects. Therefore, it would be advantageous for our constituencies and people if during the budgetary process, priority projects from each constituency is submitted to the budgetary unit in the Ministry of Finance so that over the duration of our tenure, efforts are made to address these constituency priorities, programs and projects. An example of this is the \$2.5 million that the NCRA Government is allocated to the North New Georgia Constituency in support of its forestry resources. Even a single provision as the assistance given to North New Georgia Forests plantation would go a long way to address the needs of a given constituency. This is important so that in the end we address what the people want and not what ministries and departments want. That is the annotated note there.

It is a well known truism that normal government budgets often encourage government managers to waste government money. When a contract is about \$2million, about \$500,000 or \$300,000 is added on top because of government money. This practice is world over. If the government managers, for instance, do not spend their money by the end of the financial year, then three things always happen:

- 1) They lost their left out money they have been allocated; lost it in the national coffers or the treasury.
- 2) They get less the following year.
- 3) The budgetary director scolds them for requesting more than enough money the previous year. That is causing certain attitude to our managers.

And this is another case where we need to innovate in a way we device our budget, and so it demands innovation. A way to do this is to have what is called 'expenditure control budget'. Let me explain it. Expenditure control budget allows for two important changes to occur. The first it eliminates all line items within ministerial or departmental budgets, therefore, freeing managers, in this case, PSs and accountants to move resources around as needs arise. It is a moving trend and so you follow issues or problems as they go along. Second, it allows ministries and departments keep what they did not spend from one year to the next. The net result of this is that unused funds can be shifted to new priorities and in this case, the priorities of the government, not priorities of the departments or ministries for that matter.

Because I am the member for Central Honiara, allow my indulgence to speak on the three Honiara constituencies. Having made those comments on the budget, on the importance of public budgets and how we can improve them, I wish to turn a corner and focused on the three Honiara constituencies. Here, I graciously seek the permission of my two Honiara colleagues, if I could input my two senses on our behalf.

For a long time and no one has a record of this, the three Honiara constituencies have been treated no differently from the other 47 constituencies in the country. But nothing can be further from the truth. If we were to have a levy charge on those who use provisions in our three Honiara constituencies, I am afraid all of you would have to pay a fee to all of us, including the Honiara City Council because simply you are using our provisions or our resources. In one way or another, the three Honiara constituencies have provided for all our livelihoods. I use the word livelihood very decidedly; not lifestyle or growth or standard of

living. Even our Guadalcanal MPs, some of whom are my very good friends, some who live just close by would be indebted to the three Honiara Constituencies. So one would expect that in the next budget, the three Honiara constituencies be given extra compassion, and I am not asking for money I am asking for compassion, attention and only finally I am asking for financial assistance so that we can ably with our respective constituents, some of whom include our very own members of parliament.

I wish to turn attention to another important issue in concert with the other speakers yesterday. I want to eye an observation on the need to improve Parliament work through the members of Parliament, not through committees but through members of Parliament. That is a shift of paradigm or a shift of perspective if we see it that way. In Solomon Islands, of the three arms of government, and this is not a condemnation but a mere observation which is starkly obvious. The most under developed branch of government is the Parliament. For many, many reasons we will not go into the discourse, but I will stick to what I have in my script here.

Except for the times when Parliament is in session, the Parliament “might as well die”, because parliament usually does not die, we are the ones who die but Parliament moves on and lives on. The right word is **moriban**, (FTR 5.54.28) it remains moriban and dormant in between sessions. So in between sessions there is not much life here except for what is called the paper chess moves on in terms of the shifting of papers. This remains the case for a long time, as I have mentioned. It is only recently that we have seen remarkable improvements with the assistance of UNDP. And we want to thank UNDP for its assistance in beefing up of our Parliament to work.

Here, I would suggest that Parliament increase the number of standing committees, especially new ones that would address urgent and pertinent issues such as, and I agree with the Leader of Opposition on this, education, economic development, and this cannot be left to ministries and departments but put it to Parliament so that the committee looks at it. National reforms, it is important when a government comes in and comes with its reforms that it is dealt with at the committee stage. On the budget itself, I agree with what the Member for Aoke/Langalanga said, although he is not here in Parliament today but I agree with him.

National investments, we must talk about wealth creation and not only national budget, GDP and growth. No, it must be wealth creation. We create wealth for us and wealth is a generic word that not only includes money but everything else including culture, which I agree with the member for East Makira. Globalisation, put it inside, it is a big thing and it impacts on our economies in a very big way. Leadership, parliament is nothing more and nothing less than leadership. And then futures, let us have a committee on how our futures in the next 20, 30, 40 years, the long planning on the long approach that was mentioned once or twice in Parliament already? When we implement these we must ensure that the functions and directions of such committees are clearly spelt out.

Allow me now to turn to our friends, our donors and development partners that support specifically my ministry, the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Disaster Management. Although the nature of the Ministry is crosscutting, the Ministry also attracts a lot of support from donors and development partners. On environment, Solomon Islands is a party to many multi-environmental agreements. There are acronyms and abbreviations for that (MEA). Key among them are the United Nations Environment Program and the United Nations

Conventions on Biological Diversity (UNCBD), which we also attend its meetings. To reach (FTR 5.57.03) conservation for Solomon Islands, which I recently tabled in Parliament is jointly financed by UNEP and UNCBD. The Protected Areas Act 2010 and protected areas regulations which my Ministry at the moment is finalizing are also financed by UNCBD. Our national solid waste management strategy is sponsored by JICA and the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Program (SPREP). Our National Biodiversity Action plan is supported by the International Union for Conservation of Nature and the Pacific Roundtable on Conservation. AUSTRON Foundation is another important stakeholder on environment.

On the coral triangle initiative, our national plan of action on coral reefs, fisheries and fish is supported by US Aid through the Coral Triangle Support Program (CTSP). Our Coral Triangle Support Program partners are the Nature Conservation, Wild Life Fund for Nature, the World Fish Centre, which has its office here; all these are international NGOs. In fact as I speak, around 50 climate change experts, conservationists, fisheries management and disaster specialists, academics and social scientist practitioners are arriving in the country for the sixth CPI countries of Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Timor Leste, Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands to attend the second Climate Change Adaptation regional exchange conference. This second climate adaptation regional exchange conference is organized in two parts. The first is Gizo field trip and forum where around 20 regional participants will be travelling to Gizo for a field visit in close collaboration with the Western Province. The western based NGO stakeholders is down to host this. Second is the CCA regional exchange workshop, which will be held at the Heritage Park hotel. It is not only international meetings that the Ministry is hosting in the country, but it is going to host a number of international and regional meetings including that of the least developed expert group (LDEG). The LDEG is an expert group on least developed countries, and Solomon Islands through its Director of Climate Change Division is a member of LEG. Also on climate change, we are receiving project support from the least developed countries fund (LDCF). LDCF is providing US\$6million for implementation of the National Adaptation Program of Action (NAPA). The special climate change fund is providing financial assistance for the Pacific Adaptation to Climate Change (PACC) which is jointly implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development and my ministry.

Recently the adaptation fund board approved US\$5.3 million for enhancing resilience of communities in Solomon Islands to the adverse effects of climate change in agriculture and food security. For this project we are working on 18 communities in the weather coast area of Guadalcanal, the weather coast areas of Makira, South Choiseul, North Malaita, Central Maringe, Honiara City, the Lau lagoon and the Langalanga lagoon.

Also on climate change we have received EU\$2.8million, a general budgetary support for two years commencing 2011. And on this point I will certainly address the concern of the MP for West Are Are that we should not wait. We have mainstreamed these budgetary supports in the 2011 recurrent budget and with the passage of this budget, the Solomon Islands climate change program is now ready for implementation. That is good news!

On national disaster management, we have received continuous support from our bilateral and multilateral partners. With the alignment of disaster risk reduction climate change adaption, we will attract much support from partners and stakeholders. On meteorology, the

role play by the World Meteorology Organization (WMO) is important. Through our members to the WMO, our partners namely Australia Bureau of Meteorology and the Honolulu Weather Office are able to provide tsunami early warning system for us. We are living in a global environment and in a globalized world and we must participate in this global mosaic in terms of their programs, conferences and seminars. We must value our existing partners with our external friends and where possible we must forge new relationships with new friends.

Environment, climate change, weather and disaster are all crosscutting issues and because they are crosscutting the role of everybody must be respected. The Ministry under my leadership respects the role played by every donor development partners and stakeholders. We will work together with you to promote sustainable environment and management. We will work together with you to enhance and build the resilience of communities to combat the adverse effects of climate change. We will partner with you to protect lives and properties in the global society, and we will support you as we promote a clean, healthy and unique environment for a safe, sustainable and resilient Solomon Islands communities. For all of the above, as the Minister responsible I wish to convey my vote of thanks to all our aid donors, development partners and global development organisations for their assistance they have given to Solomon Islands.

Finally, allow me to also confer my vote of thanks to a number of people who have helped to facilitate for us in this meeting and made life bearable. First my gratitude to you, Mr Speaker, the Clerk of Parliament and your hard working staff for your dedication and steadfastness. If you recall what I have said in the last sine die motion, I beg your permission to repeat it again, Mr Speaker. "With you there as our Speaker, our lives will be never same again", and we have seen differences and changes. For my hard working staff and the Permanent Staff, our able EPS and the rest of the staff I salute them. A special thank you to the weather forecasting group who work seven days a week, four weeks a month, 12 months a year for their dedication and fortitude in the work they have carried and will carry out.

Finally, I wish to thank people of my constituency, the Central Honiara Constituency who have heeded my advice. I think anything and everything will be seen after the Budget. On that high note I thank you and I support the motion.

Mr. ETE (MP East Honiara): I want to extend my thanks to the Government, the Prime Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister, the Clerk and your team. I do not have a speech but I have eight points to make and I promised to go through one point per minute. I basically would be talking to the Ministers. I have no jurisdiction over you but please accept some of the advices that we are giving you.

On the Ministry of Education, the systems seem not to be okay, there is need for review of those systems. I am asking who and by looking at Public Service Commission and Teaching Service Commission. As I mentioned last time the Teaching Service Commission came into effect in 1984, it was not there in the Independence constitution, when it came in, in 1984 it caused a bit of problem because we do not know who employs who. That is what I think the Minister needs to look into.

I want to thank the Minister for Public Service, who is here for many things he enacted, especially the long service benefit. I am saying this because in the abundance of resources

regardless of whether you have perfect machine, materials, you have money to do it, but if you do not have manpower, you do not make your manpower happy they will not work for you. I ask the Government to look into this when implementing the growth centres.

To the Minister of Forests I would like to like us to once again review all the technological agreements. Many of the water supplies that have been written about have never been reviewed for the last 15 or so years and no successive government have done it. The place I am staying in Roviana has no trees and so I had to cut timber in Rendova. I would like us to stop back felling. A lot of places in this country have done back felling three times already.

When the government says only the forest is the resource to export timber from which captures our revenue, I want the Government to seriously look at ensuring no back felling happens. If you take into account the 500,000 population of the country and with the talk of today that in 2019 forestry will be gone, if you take this population against one tree each person, it is already depleted; one tree each person and there are no trees left. I would like us therefore to review the forestry, and in my mind we should start to think about reducing forestry. We are exporting 1.7billion cubic metres per annum outside and so I would like us to look into that with the view of reviewing the back felling license.

I now would like to talk briefly on health and I applaud the Minister because I think the Minister is doing very well. One thing I would like to see happen in the ministry is for a national health survey to be carried out otherwise every planning in the Ministry of Health will be done on mere assumptions. The last one was done in 1986 by Dr. Rodgers, and this has to happen before you can review the role and facility delineation policy. We tried it but we could not do it because we just assume.

The second point on health is I want to see an overseas referral committee established. To date they are talking only in the corridors as to who should go. The gynaecology here and the others are just talking in front of No. 9. The Ministers and us, we are okay because when our wives and children are sick we will go to St Vincent, but what about our people? The bottom line here is that I want to see the MIR machine, Cat scan machines to be there at the No.9 as it is only \$1million. Radiography must be digitized, the medical laboratory must be improved, the counting analysis is done manually there, and a clinical governance procedure must be established there. When someone is dead a report is produced, when a person is discharged, a discharge summary is provided, what protocols are there, what kind of procedure is done to a patient, who is the patient and we must be accessible to the medical records on request. Today, that is half done at the No. 9. When you go to No. 9, 55 percent of deaths at the National Referral Hospital, No.9 according to inpatient record for this year alone is only children. When I say children it is from one to 13 years and so I want us to take note of this. **The ICD ten** (FTR 6.10.09) coding system must be encouraged so that we see data. If you hear remarks coming from No.9 saying yaws has increased by some numbers, that is mere assumption because there is no coding taking place. And I am happy and have faith on the Minister that he is going to do this.

I shall now come to the Ministry of Lands, and I appreciate very much the Ministry of Lands, but I am not happy that the TOL provision is not provided for in this current budget. I would like to suggest if you can resort to the CW and bring in a supplementary appropriation bill here to Parliament to try and support my people at Kombito and Burns Creek who have

been treated for the last 20 odd or so years as second class citizens in this country. These people have no water and no electricity. They are still planning to do it and the planning still goes on until today. Probably the same is with White River. We would like our houses to have electricity and we would also like the offer of the FTE so that we are the same as everybody else in this country.

I want to go on to the Ministry of Home Affairs now. I think we have discussed this, but I would like to put forward the Burns Creek issue. If the Government is dead serious about this, I want that when the government is to do it, it has to do it properly. The Government has to purchase a land and two bedroom houses must be built and given to 150 people who will be evacuated from Burns Creek. When militia was pronounced, and not because of their own making but the making of politicians; let us be frank about it, the violence of 2000 is the making of political leaders and leaders of this country. Because of the violence these people came and settled in Burns Creek and so if they are going to be evacuated they must be given letters of offer of a registered land plus a two bedroom house. That is something the Minister of Finance could address through the CW and probably bring a supplementation bill to Parliament. Thank you, I think the Minister is already addressing this and so I am happy with it.

On the Ministry of Infrastructure Development (MID) I would like to thank the Minister of MID for the Vura road. I thank the Prime Minister for honouring our request with the Minister of Minister Finance for maintaining the Vura road in December. I thank very much the PS of Finance. My people of East Honiara very much appreciate the road and so I would like to thank the NCRA Government for that.

I like to also say that the Government is looking at bringing a Cabinet paper to broker work outside for our sea farers in the country. They are very important to the MID so that they can be employed outside our country. Some of them are highly qualified but yet are roaming around Honiara. I think the MID should help them to work outside.

The acronym (b) is probably a household name already in this country for the last six months; the acronym (b) with a capital (B) – Bureau and it is to promote growth centres. I am very glad the Government is going down that path, and I want to encourage ministers to visit Korea. We went to Korea prior to my contesting the election; I went down and had a look at the new village movement in Korea. Korea is one of the least developed countries in the world in the 1920s. The loan it got from the Breton Wood Twins, those two institutions, the World Bank and the IMF enabled Korea to come out as an industrialized country in a very, very short time, only 50 odd years. I think the NCRA Government is heading down the correct path in the new village movement. But our adoption of the Korea model to be applied here in Solomon Islands needs legislative support to push for it. I also think some functions of economic planning and finance must come under the Bureau. It has to be a little bit higher than the other ministries to make it work, like powers must be defined properly.

My second last point is on the SOEs. The SOEs have made no profit for the Government in the last 34 years, hence I would like to ask a question whether it is the role of the Government to fly an aeroplane. The government has been doing it because we wanted to provide services with other donors subsidizing it, but I do not think it is the Government's role to do that. It should be privatized so that investors come to compete to operate things like that on the government's behalf. In countries like Australia, entities like that are not owned by the

government. Australia is a big country and so we cannot compare ourselves with them. I urge the government otherwise we will be giving SOEs subventions for the next 34 years. Somewhere along the line we must compete in pure capitalistic model, the competitive model.

In conclusion, I want to thank the government and the people of Republic of China on Taiwan, the Australian Government, the New Zealand Government, the British Government and other governments that are supporting this country. I want to say to the people of East Honiara that I thank you very much for supporting me so far. I ask you to work with me for us to enhance the plans of the constituency for the next three and half years. With those, I thank you very much.

Hon. MANETOALI (*Minister for Culture & Tourism*): First of all, I would like to thank the honourable Prime Minister for moving this motion. I will be very brief as I will only contribute in two areas because of the time limit of 10 minutes, and so my eyes will also go to that clock on the wall so that I confine within the time limit put by you, Mr Speaker.

The two areas I am going to look at are my ministry and a little bit on my constituency. My ministry of Culture and Tourism is what I will touch on first. Solomon Islands divided into islands, communities, villages, tribes and clans. These islands when put together are called Solomon Islands and Solomon Islands is a country full of different cultures and customs. And we, the 50 Members of Parliament are representatives of those people with different customs and different cultures even inside your own constituencies. In order to understand these people, in order to understand them well, you must understand their cultures and customs. I believe all of us know very well our culture.

My Ministry is very interested in culture and that is why there is the Ministry of Culture and Tourism. Culture mainly deals with customs, traditions and histories, arts and crafts, custom dancing, carvings, weaving, cooking, all these are part of our cultures. We also have our chiefs and elders there who are the custodians or guardians of our cultures. Some of us in Parliament today are chiefs too. Yourself, Mr Speaker, you are a paramount chief. Some chiefs as well are sitting down here too and they are the guardians of our customs and cultures. That is why we have these festivals. In July 2012, Solomon Islands will host the Festival of Pacific Arts, and that is what I want to touch on. I want to touch on the festival of Pacific Arts in July 2012; that is the main area I want to talk about.

The Festival of Pacific Arts was an initiative of the Council of Pacific Arts under the Secretariat of the Pacific Community formerly known as the South Pacific Commission of which we are a member. The first Festival of Pacific Arts was hosted by Fiji 1972, and since then it was held every four years and brings together more than 2000 artists and other cultural practitioners all over the pacific region including Australia and New Zealand. The activities and events of this festival include traditional dances, drama or theatre, live music concerts, exhibition of visual arts, carvings, handicrafts, traditional cooking, traditional canoeing and navigational art, traditional healing practices, traditional games, storytelling, literary art of writing, film shows and many more including children's exhibition. There will also be symposiums and forums whereby artists and cultural practitioners from all over the region will have the opportunity to share their skills and experiences with each other.

Under the guiding principles of the Council of Pacific Arts and Culture of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community, the core objectives of the festival of Pacific Arts are:

- (i) to help foster the development of arts and culture within the region,
- (ii) to raise awareness on the potential list, a significant contributors to social economic development and aspirations of Pacific island countries, and
- (iii) fostering respect and appreciation of each other's cultures as a means of achieving regional stability and cooperation.

The festival provides an avenue whereby regional countries can be able to highlight common issues affecting Pacific island countries, especially in the social and cultural sectors.

Solomon Islands presented its bid to host the 11th Festival of Pacific Arts in 2004 during the 9th Festival of Pacific Arts in Palau. The country was finally given the opportunity to host this prestigious event after the Hawaiian Islands and Wallis and Futuna withdrew their bids to host this festival in 2012.

Solomon Islands has participated in festivals, expos and other promotional events overseas ever since we became independent. However, what we have shown in past participations is just only the tip of the iceberg. There is yet so much that this country is able to offer, not only for our region but also to the rest of the world to see the real beauty of our beloved country, not only in terms of our environment and people but as well as our cultural heritage and arts.

The 11th Festival of Pacific Arts in 2012 will be the opportunity for Solomon Islands to showcase its national pride in full force. With all our provinces and people mobilising for this great event this will be a moment when this country sets a new era in terms of how the world sees us and the opportunities it will provide to help us progress into the future. I would like to thank the Solomon Islands Government for the budget it has given for this cultural festival in 2012 as well as the \$13.3million given by the government of the Republic of Taiwan. I really thank the Republic of Taiwan for contributing \$13.3million towards this Pacific Arts Festival.

The development budget caters for major priority areas and infrastructural projects which will require immediate progress and implementation due to time limitation. This includes festival venues, landscaping and beautification of Honiara City and other festival venues, transportation and logistics, gifts and technical equipments, accommodation, venues and food preparations, arts preparation. Work is going on now.

Also the national organising committee for this festival is scoping for every possible avenues to acquire funding assistance for this festival, most especially from donor partners. The national organising committee is undergoing consultations at this time with stakeholders and donor partners in securing possible funding and technical assistance with the support of the SPC and my Ministry. Further to this, the organising committee is also liaising with the Ministry of Planning and Aid Coordination for possible external funding assistance.

Preparations for the cultural festival are going on, especially when the budget is passed now because this is a very important event we have to prepare for. And one of the main things is that we have to clean Honiara. I really thank those who have started to clean Honiara at this

time because Honiara must be clean. At the moment we are still careless, spitting of betel nut all over the place, throwing rubbish anywhere, especially along roads and the sea as well. I think those are some of the things that we should be concerned about so that Honiara is clean so that people coming in from overseas are not confused as to whether this is Singapore because Singapore is a very clean city. It is a very important thing that citizens of this nation must consider, and that is to start cleaning up our environment.

Now I want to touch on tourism. Tourism in Solomon Islands is a growing industry. We now have hotels, motels, rest houses, resorts and home stays and so we are already in the tourism industry. But we will improve much more when the tourism and hospitality school is complete. A lot of our people will attend the tourism and hospitality school and there is going to be big improvements on the tourism industry in Solomon Islands.

Solomon Islands is made up of beautiful islands, from Temotu to the Shortlands in the west are very beautiful and ideal places for tourism development. Western Province has taken the leading role in pushing forward the tourism industry and other provinces are coming up as well. The Western Provincial Government now has put tourism as its priority, which is very good. Now that the budget is passed I would like to visit Gizo, Rennell, Kirakira and Lata as the Minister of Tourism. I must talk with the provincial authorities and one or two other stakeholders. I as the Minister of Tourism must push for this industry to move forward. As I have said, Solomon Islands is a very beautiful country and tourism definitely is the way forward for this country.

Lastly, I want to come to my constituency. On behalf of my people of Gao/Bugoto I would like to congratulate the two new members of Parliament of Mbaegu/Asifola and Shortlands. Congratulations to you two for winning the elections to be representatives of your people. On the other hand, as Easter is approaching I would like to pass my Easter greetings to the chiefs, elders, men and women and children of Gao/Bugotu. I would like to thank my people of Gao/Bugoto that after the constituency congress in October last year, there is a lot of improvement on constituency matters. I want to thank my people that after the congress they have done very well. I want to thank my people for taking heed to advices and resolutions that came up during that congress. As usual the parliament meeting has now come to an end and so I will visit you anytime from now after Parliament. I will also see you at the constituency cultural festival in September this year.

Lastly, my acknowledgment to you, Mr. Speaker, for your control of this meeting. I also acknowledge the Clerk and the staff of the Parliament for their hard work. I also do not forgetting the Permanent secretary of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism and staff for your hard work during this budget meeting. I support the motion and beg to take my seat.

Mr HANARIA (*East Are Are*): Thank you for giving me this opportunity to express myself in contributing to the motion of sine die moved by the honourable Prime Minister.

Firstly, I wish to thank the Prime Minister for his leadership in the last eight months as the Prime Minister of Solomon Islands. He has demonstrated a father-like ability in his leadership role in making sure his political family is intact during political turmoils, and at the same time opens his door to political destitute with the aim of raising a much bigger family in Solomon Islands politics. I would also like to thank the Deputy Prime Minister, Cabinet

Ministers, the Leader of Opposition, the Leader of the Independent Group in Parliament and Members of Parliament for the cordial relationship we have had in this Parliament House, which created an atmosphere of freedom and favourable environment where we can mingle and express ourselves freely.

I would like to give special congratulations to the Minister of Finance and Treasury for his determination and courage in bringing to Parliament a budget of \$2.2 billion in which we expect to have a surplus of \$24 million. It is now up to the machinery of the government through permanent secretaries and accountable officers to implement and manage this budget properly to achieve the needed services and tangible projects aimed for in the 2011 Appropriation Bill 2011. Mr Speaker, I also wish to thank you for your patience and tolerance in ensuring the parliament sittings are controlled and properly guided during deliberations. Also thank you for your supporting staff and officers for ensuring that parliament business operates fluently without hassle and unexpected delays. On the same token I would like to welcome the two new members of Parliament, the honourable Chris Laore for Shortlands and honourable Tome for Mbaegu/Asifola. Welcome to the club of politicians!

The beauty of this motion is to look back and appreciate what has happened during the last eight months since the formation of government. For me, it has been a privilege to be a member of the Public Accounts Committee and therefore I was involved in the scrutiny of the 2011 Appropriation Bill 2011 and also the 2010 Supplementary Appropriation Bill 2011.

The PAC gave me the opportunity to expose myself and to interact with permanent secretaries, under secretaries, financial controllers and senior government officials who offered their time and self in answering questions and making us clear on the budget. I would like to thank the Chairman of the PAC, the Member for North New Georgia for his sound leadership during the week long deliberations of the Committee. Similarly, I would like to thank members of the PAC, including the Auditor General and the supporting staff of Parliament for ensuring that documents are always ready in time for the meetings.

I learned a great deal about the things that are happening in our political development and have seen that self interest is growing bigger than the interest of the nation of Solomon Islands. We have some political elements in this House who wanted to topple the government of the day just because their wishes or business interests have not been met or turned down or not accepted by Government. There are avenues to go about expressing your wishes, either in cabinet or government caucus if you are with the government or in parliamentary debates or through motions of no confidence. Unfortunately, some of these people did not identify themselves to any side of this House. They have been used as message bankers for both sides. That is not helping our political situation. For purposes of ensuring there is confidence and trust you should have to choose either you are with the government or in the opposition side.

I would also like to clarify my position as I recently joined the NCRA Government. I did not join NCRA Government to displace anybody nor do I have any dispute or any grudges against my colleagues in the opposition side. I have two principle reasons why I joined the NCRA Government today. Firstly, I have been mandated by my people of East Are Are constituency to join the current government to ensure that our needed services and tangible projects in East Are Are constituency are being considered and realized. Secondly, after waiting at bay for eight months, I believe it is time for me to move on and to use my potential talents

and experience to help the current government to move forward. I am at liberty to accept any responsibility that is given to me by NCRA in the future and I am also willing to be a backbencher.

Four years is not long to stay outside of governments and it is quite difficult to meaningfully make yourself known to your people in a tangible manner. Let me tell you a story that during my election campaign in July 2010, I spoke to the people of one of the biggest village communities in East Are constituency with a population of nearly 2000 people. During question time a teacher who has been teaching for 30 years stood up and raised his disappointment about the way politicians are running the nation of Solomon Islands and the government at large. He concluded to say that his community does not need a government and that they would organize the community to look and take care of themselves without the help of government.

However, this particular community last month experienced a disaster with their water supply pipelines. The unfriendly effect of the tsunami as a result of the earthquake that hit Japan had totally destroyed their underwater pipeline deeply covering it with mud and debris and as result the water supply is totally cut off from the community. There is high health risk related to poor drinking water and poor sanitation, especially children, sick people and students who are vulnerable to disease infections. This community would definitely need government's help and does not need the ill-advice of the teacher. This story only illustrates my reason of joining the NCRA Government.

We have passed a budget which we expect to deliver needed services to our people. Do we have control over the disbursement or spending of this budget? What I can say here is that although we expect permanent secretaries as accountable officers to control spending, we have to realize that the middle and lower class officers are doing the spending most of the time because what they prefer to purchase would be what the permanent secretary would approve, in any case. What I am saying here is that there needs to be more controlled on the budget and the PS of the Ministry of Finance during his presentation said "we must be spending according to the Budget and not the cash flow".

I would only agree with my colleague and member of PCP (FTR 6.39.19) as well that there is fragmentation and there is no stickability. I do not blame anyone for the disloyalty but may be this sign calls for revisiting of the Political Party Integrity Bill that was shelved by the last government. There is a need for stickability and loyalty and I believe the bill would help curb some of our weaknesses.

I have learnt a lot from the 2011 Appropriation Bill 2011 presented in Parliament by the Minister of Finance. I would like to thank RAMSI for its help in improving the system of debt collection in our domestic revenue source, especially the Inland Revenue Department and Customs and Excise. This has helped increase collection revenue to an estimated \$1.9billion. There is room for further improvement and there is need to look seriously at the management of some of the companies like the Ports Authority to complement the good work of Customs and Excise. The overcrowding of shipping containers at the wharf does not help in customs checks and collections and also some containers are littering the Honiara roads. If you look at the highway west of Rove, you would see containers lying very close to the roads and that is very vulnerable to accidents. Some of the staffs in the Ports Authority have been working there

for about 40 years and we should start looking at putting fresh blood and new people in the management system.

I would like to thank our development partners and donor agencies for their continued support of our budget, which has contributed to about 18 to 20 percent of the budget. Thank you for your continuous help to Solomon Islands.

I would like to embrace the existence of the RCDF and Livelihood funds. These programs should run complementary to the Government's program. Identify where funds could complement government's program. The beauty about the RCDF is that money goes direct to our constituencies. This is the first time in many years for East Are Are constituency to feel the effect of money reaching the rural population. All families in East Are Are should each have one panel of solar light in 2014. I am expected to deliver 100 houses per year and we expect to have 400 families housed within my period in Parliament.

Fiscal infrastructure development is of paramount importance because it enhances project development in rural areas, for example the Kiu/Masupa road needs to be done to help our people move inland to plant crops on fertile lands instead of fighting over the same piece of land. I would like to thank the NCRA Government for the allocation of \$2.5million for the Waisisi Oil Palm project because this will create employment opportunities for the West Are Are and East Are Are constituents. We are the same people although we are divided by the range mountains.

I strongly believe that in order to stimulate the macro economy of Solomon Islands, we need to create development opportunities like Waisisi Oil Palm for the people to work, earn money and spend it in rural areas. Political handouts cannot help the macro economy of Solomon Islands.

Talking about infrastructure to stimulate our economic sector, I would like to declare in this House that our vision for East Are Are constituency is to have its own airport by 2012/2013. This airport will help boost our tourism sector and it should complement the Atoifi airport in East Kwaio constituency and Parasi airport in the Small Malaita constituency. East Are Are constituency does not have a hospital and so there is need to establish a mini hospital and to be manned by a doctor to provide needed services to my people. The corporate and development plan is that East Are Are would have a ship of its own to service its people in the 2014/2015 financial year.

Our land tenure system is an obstacle to development. I am supportive of NCRA's policy on land reform and very happy by the way the Government through its Bureau of Social Economic Reform is trying to address land reform. I will support any motion that comes up on our land tenure systems that will encourage landowners to take up developments and benefit out of their resources.

Please allow me to say a few words to my people of East Are Are constituency. I am humble enough on behalf of my family to wish you a happy Easter celebrations and think of Jesus' death on the Cross as significant of forgiveness to our sins. My family and I would like to thank you for your continuous support. We have a few issues to overcome and the move to overcome these issues has shown very positive signs. It would not be long before we are on top of these issues. In regards to my election petition, I am engaging a new lawyer to take over from JK Legal services. When I finalize this engagement I will let you know in the near future.

Thank you for the trust and confidence you have on me to lead you for the next three and half years.

To my supporters, I would like to assure you that I am trying my best with my committee and with the help of the CDO to make sure our plans for the next three and half years are met. Let us not be complacent with our victory but let us begin our hard work, sacrifice and let us attain sound management of the resources of East Are Are. I would like to prove ourselves in fulfilling our expectation to our constituency by having a development plan in place that will act as a roadmap for the development of East Are Are Constituency. The feedback report I heard from our CDO's tour is very impressive and I am very excited about it.

Mr Speaker, before I take my seat I would like to thank you and your supporting staff, especially those who bring us water to drink every day. I also thank your security staff for the good work. With those few comments I support the motion.

Mr SANDAKABATU (MP North West Choiseul): I really welcome this opportunity to stand up and I thank you for the opportunity that I now have to contribute to this motion of sine die. On the same note, on behalf of my people of North West Choiseul constituency, I wish to further thank you, Mr Speaker, for your able conduct of parliament in our second parliamentary sitting, which is about to be concluded, and I am perhaps the last speaker. Similarly, I thank the honourable Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister, all ministers of the crown and especially the Finance Minister for your seven months of hard work and to eventually tabled and passed the 2011 Budget in the current meeting of Parliament. Certainly, a lot of work has been done in coming up with policies, policy translations and finally the 2011 Budget that will translate policies into actions. All these hard work will hopefully pave better ways of delivering the much needed services to the people of this nation in the manner that is efficient effective and fair. On behalf of my people, the people of North West Choiseul Constituency I would like to also thank the permanent secretaries, staff of government ministries and the various parliamentary committees that are directly involved in putting together the 2011 Budget, which we have now just passed. All your efforts are very much appreciated.

On the motion of sine die, I would like to bring to the attention of this honourable House that this country needs to start thinking about taking care of its own people at the very end of our socio and economic ladder or status. This would be the elderly, the disable, the orphaned, and soon will be drug addicts and other victims brought about by the socio and economic disparities we are now experiencing. At the moment, care for our people in the mentioned categories is left to immediate families and relatives. Because of our culture it is obligatory for parents and relatives to take charge of the elderly and the disabled. However, the spirit of family obligation is slowly slipping away as parents and relatives try to negate between culture, responsibility and the economics of survival in a socio economic climate that is far or bleak. Hence, the Government needs to critically look at ways to look after its elderly, the disabled and the disadvantaged sectors of our society.

Secondly, agriculture is the means for survival in this nation and I am sure everybody in this House will agree. It is the main occupation for the bulk of our population living and dying in the villages. Their food gardens are food security and water as gifts from above. However, much attention should be given to agriculture activities and programs that will continue to look

after families across generations. In this regard, coconut in my observation is the crop that has been with us for a long, long time. All other crops and livestock were introduced much later and their adoption rate by farmers is a bit slower.

My point is that the Government should be considering a subsidy scheme that will encourage farmers to plant more coconut groves similar to that of the 1970s; the coconut subsidy scheme which has worked very well. I believe if the subsidy scheme is applied for any commercial crops or livestock, a majority of our farmers will take up their bush knives and axes and start working right away.

Finally, there are a lot of students being trained in-country, perhaps in SICHE and other institutions and overseas each year, every year. But at the end of their training there is less or little job for them. The Government seems to be saying that my responsibility ends the moment their training ends too. If so, why train our people in the first place? Many were very frustrated on their return, and I am sure when some more returns it will be the same as well, to find that they cannot find work.

This week, the USP and UPNG Universities had their annual graduation ceremonies through which many of our students graduated with flying colours, of course. I am sad to say that many of them may not find work waiting for them on their return. Unlike our times when we came back, immediately the day we touched down there was work for us. I know that job creation is a difficult one. Unemployment is a difficult problem to tackle but one that the Government must not put off or shy away from. The Government must continue to look for ways to create job opportunities for our growing population. Only then we will have a stable and developing country.

Before I resume my seat I would like to sincerely thank the media, the Clerk to National Parliament, the Deputy Clerk, the new Sergeant at Arms and all staff of the National Parliament Office, including the security staff, the police, the drivers, kitchen staff, cleaners and, of course, the gardeners. Your contribution to the Parliament has been excellent. Thank you indeed.

Finally, I thank my good people of North West Choiseul for their trust, confidence and also prayers for me. Thank you for your hard work in getting our programs to go ahead. I thank you for the 80 houses that you have started. Please expect another 40 houses to be on its way this week. With that I also convey my sincere thank you and happy Easter to you my wantoks in Choiseul, especially North West Choiseul and also of course Members of this Parliament and the Speaker. With that I support the motion and resume my seat.

Hon. TAREMAE (*Minister for Peace and Reconciliation*): First I would like to thank God the Almighty for His great love and guidance throughout this meeting. You yourself, Mr. Speaker, I thank you for your wisdom in which you have made rulings throughout this second meeting of Parliament. Acknowledgement also goes to the Minister of Finance, officials and officers in ministries that have spent their time preparing the 2011 Budget which we have passed for the spending of the next remaining months for this year 2011.

Acknowledgement also goes to the Public Accounts Committee for its scrutiny of the budget. Without its hard work we would not have come this far. Acknowledgment also goes to the SIBC management for bringing this meeting live broadcast down to our rural dwellers where 95% of our population have access to listening through the radio. I also acknowledge the

One News management for its availability enabling this meeting to be televised in which 5% of our population have access to. I also want to acknowledge the Minister of Police, National Security and Correctional Services for providing security during this meeting. Mr Speaker, my acknowledgement also goes to your good office for the involvement of your officers in making this meeting a successful one. Acknowledgment also goes to the Opposition side for its wisdom and contribution in supporting the 2011 Budget. Thus the passage of the 2011 Budget came as a huge relief to my people because it now means that teachers, nurses, police officers and public servants in and from my constituency will be paid comes May 1st 2011.

My special thanks to my friend and Member of Parliament for Aoke/Langalanga for his maturity and change of heart at the eleventh hour. No doubt, the current Opposition Leader had done a good job in ensuring his deputy and followers, the group stands on matters of national interest such as the passage of our national budget.

I would also like to acknowledge church leaders and church members who have been supporting us in praying for God's guidance and wisdom for all of us 50 members of this House. I would also like to acknowledge the families of the 50 members of this House, especially the wives of the 50 members of this House for supporting us and understanding rendered to us. Without them we would not have come to represent our people in this House. To the Prime Minister, Ministers, Backbenchers, acknowledgment to you all. May all the decisions you make be guided by the Almighty.

On behalf of my people of Central Makira constituency, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the new Leader of the Opposition for the position you have taken. Also, I would like to congratulate the two newly elected members, the Member for Shortlands and the Member for Mbaegu/Asifola. Your people have trust in you and that is why you won the battle and now you are here. Welcome to the politics team!

Lastly, I would like to assure my good people of the Central Makira constituency that the budget has now been passed and whatever belongs to you must be given to you. It is a wish I have had for the last 10 years but have had no chance to have power in distributing this. I wish all my good people of Central Makira constituency a happy Easter celebrations 2011. With these few remarks, I support the motion.

Hon. MAELANGA (*Deputy Prime Minister & Minister for Home Affairs*): First of all, I would like to thank God for looking after us during our time of meeting. Secondly, I would like to thank the Speaker, the Clerk and staff of Parliament for ensuring our parliament meeting goes on successfully and we now come to the end of the meeting today. Also, I would like to thank the Minister of Finance for getting the budget to Parliament which we have now passed. I thank your Permanent Secretary and your staff. I also want to thank all ministers and your permanent secretaries for ensuring the Budget comes to Parliament and get it passed. I also want to thank the two newly elected members of Parliament, the MP for Mbaegu/Asifola and the MP for Shortlands. Congratulations and wish you both success in your endeavours as a Member of Parliament.

I just want to inform the House of activities going on in my ministry. We are working on the electoral reform, which is an important reform to ensure that in 2014 we have a proper voting system. We are also working on civic education, which is for churches because as we

know this time there are a lot of criminal activities and crime is on the increase. Youths are involved very much in drugs and are drug addicts themselves and so the Ministry is looking very seriously to involve the churches to work with communities in our urban areas and also in the rural areas.

Another thing I want to mention here is, and I would like to thank the Government for its policy on the growth centres. This is an area that I appreciate very much and I look forward to a growth centre if one is going to be in my constituency. I really support the NCRA's policy on this to be implemented during its four-year term in office. If NCRA Government returns in 2014 it will surely continue on with that policy.

I also want to see the Auluta basin project continued with. I will try to push for it so that it eventuates. This project is a long time project and it has not been operational, but I will try to see that this project happens because it is a project that will help our people and also the economy of the country as a whole.

I also would like to touch on the Political Party Integrity Bill. I am really in support of that bill and I am looking forward for this bill to be brought here to parliament in any future meetings. And here I call on all Members to support this bill when it comes in here. As we all know during this Ninth Parliament I seem to find that it is quite different in that two or three new things have happened and that is why I really want to see the Political Party and Integrity Bill to be brought here to avoid our hopping here and there. As we all know if this bill is passed there will be stability in our government because stability is very important. When there is stability there will be respect, there will be honesty and there will be perseverance. The Government will have perseverance to move things forward as it is stable. That is one thing I would like to see happen.

I am also happy with the additional standing committees that we have passed here. I thank the Prime Minister for moving a motion to that effect and that we have passed three new additional standing committees in Parliament. We have heard Members raising health issues, which is all the more reason why we need those committees to be established so that they can support the Ministry of Health on areas that need something to happen, especially our health sector, our security and also education.

Lastly, I would like to comment on the climate change adaptation program. In my constituency I am looking after people from the bush and those on the coast, and I would like my colleague minister responsible for environment to include my people in any other protection programme that the Ministry is going to take to look after my people of Kwai and Ngongosila who are also facing problems caused by sea level rise and climate change.

Lastly, I would like to thank donor partners that continue to give support us in our country. Also, I would like to thank the private sectors for their support/contribution to the economy of this country. I would also like to thank RAMSI for its work in the country, especially on law and order and other programs they continue to support us through partnership framework and through other ministries of the government.

On law and order I would like to thank RAMSI and the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force for their hard work and contribution in maintaining law and order and protecting our people from crime and other bad things that come in to spoil our country. I also would like to thank those who are in prison, those who are sick in the hospitals in one way or the other. I

thank those who continue to pray for us, the leaders and the people of the country. I would like to thank the prison officers who are looking after the inmates. I also would like to thank the doctors and nurses who continue to care for the sick.

Finally, I thank my people of East Malaita constituency for their support and confidence in me for re-electing me at the 2010 election so that I continue to look after them in the next four years. I would like to wish them all the best in their Easter celebrations this month. I wish God's blessing upon them, especially the church leaders, the chiefs, women and children of East Malaita constituency. After this Parliament meeting if I have time I will come down to see you so that we continue with our projects.

Lastly but not the least, I would like to thank my council of East Malaita Constituency for their hard work which they continue to do for me. Thank you very much Mr Speaker and once again I wish God's blessing to all of us Members of Parliament and our families and God's blessings to those who will go back to visit their people in the provinces. Thank you very much and I support the motion.

Hon Philip: Thank you for the opportunity at last to windup the motion of Sine Die today. I would like to acknowledge and admit that it has been a long and difficult day for you, Sir, and for all of us. I also understand that there are number of people who opted to leave it for this time and they might like to contribute in the next sine die motion.

In that way, Mr Speaker, I would like to thank you most sincerely. I thank all members of Parliament, those on this side of the House and those on that side of the House for their contribution to the debate of this traditional motion which comes up at the end of every meeting. And so if you are not happy because you have not got the chance now, there is always one that is coming around this year.

I know there has been an overwhelming admission and expression that this meeting has been a highly successful meeting and although it is a brief one for some, it was successful because we have been able to pass the 2011 Budget, the first one for NCRA Government, as we have been reminding ourselves which was the main business of our meeting. In this regard, I wish to once again thank my hardworking Minister for Finance and his staff and all the permanent secretaries of the various ministries and their staffs in making sure the Budget was prepared properly and submitted to Parliament on time. I also wish to thank the Leader of Opposition and those on his side of the House for their support of the 2011 Budget as well.

I noted some of the points raised by Members of Parliament on papers which are all over here, but I would like to just say that I truly appreciate the criticisms, the admonitions and advices rendered to the Government to prepare itself for the implementation of its program. This is the tool we have been waiting for, the planning process has unfortunately taken us about eight months, but if you are going to prepare something good it has to take time. If you are a cook the longer it takes the better tasting it, it is tastier because if you do it roughly, say within one or two seconds sometimes it is not cooked and your belly will be painful. So I think the longer we take, although it is not totally owing to that particular analogy but we did encounter many difficulties as a government and for me as a leader of the government it has been a very tough time.

I will now go through all the detailed contributions and the points raised by all of you although I appreciate them very much. All that you have raised are of value and I know that ministers have been listening to the speeches and I am sure we will take heed and take to heart some of the things that speakers and contributors have given to us on this side of the government.

I noted the disappointment of the Leader of the Opposition with the limited time given to MPs to debate this motion. I do take that to heart as well. Although he attributed this to my fear of the motion of no confidence, that is not the case. That is not true and this is not the only first time that the motion of sine die is given a day to debate. Be that as it may I wish to thank him for his understanding and cooperation in accepting your decision, Mr Speaker, not to proceed with the motion of no confidence in your ruling yesterday.

Governance and leadership of this country do not only fall on the government, it is the collective responsibility of all of us Members of Parliament. And therefore, I wish to acknowledge the sentiments expressed by the Leader of the Opposition indicating his willingness to work with the Government in addressing matters and issues of national interest. The establishment of the three additional committees, which Parliament endorsed and passed yesterday through a motion launched by myself to amend the relevant standing orders will provide an opportunity for Members of Parliament on both sides of the House to work together and advise Parliament how best to address issues of national interest. I think that is all very important. Sentiments have also been expressed quite wildly here that the parliamentary standing committees must be truly bipartisan. In that sense I would like to ask your concurrence, Mr Speaker, in ensuring the responsibility truly reflects a bipartisan approach.

The NCRA Government is firmly committed and genuine in its endeavours to work closely with all stakeholders to make Solomon Islands a better place for all of us and our overseas friends and all the people that admire this country and come to visit us; we are building this country for all of us. The Minister of Finance and Treasury in his contribution to the debate on this motion this morning made an important remark on the need for us to respect each other since we are given the same mandate by our people or constituents. I fully concur with him. All of us have the same mandate and we are national leaders and I wish to add that it is important that we act and talk and conduct ourselves as such.

The support and cooperation of our development partners will continue to be vital for our development aspirations and plans. In this regard I wish to take once again this opportunity to acknowledge the support and assistance of our development partners and donors towards the 2011 Budget, especially the development budget. Through their programs I also pay tribute to the contribution of NGOs and civil society organizations and churches to the development and welfare of our communities. I wish to assure them that the NCRA Government will continue to work closely with them. I also thank RAMSI for its continuing contribution and work under the SIG-RAMSI partnership framework. The Government is committed to working closely with that particular arrangement and we trust the new Special Coordinator will pick up from where his predecessor left. It is important that we remain engaged with our overseas friends and explore additional and potential opportunities with them. Therefore, I wish to recognise the work that my Foreign Minister and other ministers have done in exploring such opportunities with various countries and regions. The Foreign

Minister this morning informed Parliament of various opportunities including training, scholarships that various countries such as India, I forgot to mention South Korea as well, to Pukim National University, a national university which I am an alumni of are offering to Solomon Islands and therefore the onus is on us to capitalise and fully utilise these opportunities.

Infrastructure development and services will continue to be critical in our economic development endeavours, and I wish to thank the hardworking Minister of Infrastructure Development for his assurance to Parliament this morning that his Ministry will be do its utmost best to provide the necessary infrastructure development and services, especially to our rural areas. Above all, I wish also to acknowledge the good performance of all ministers during this meeting of Parliament. I think you have done well lads, especially in defending your budgets at the committee of supply where you have done extremely well.

It is important that all of us take serious interest in the issue of climate change. It is not only a phenomenon but it is a global reality. It is destroying this globe or this world at a much faster rate than we have been expecting; the sea rise, the occurrences of cyclones, tsunamis and tornados and all that. I think those of us who believe in the soon coming of Jesus know that time is at hand. So while you are doing your parliamentary duties make sure that you prepare yourself too, all of us.

I wish to acknowledge the remarks made by the honourable member of Mbaegu/Asifola this morning on this issue as far as it concerns his constituency. I acknowledge that it is a huge global challenge but action has to start at home. We have to start looking at the threats of climate change, not only in the mitigating part of it but also in adaptation. If it happens let us do something and move away from possible risks. I am grateful for the European Union funding support towards our national adaptation program.

Much has been also said about the Bureau during this meeting. I am confident that once the Bureau office becomes fully operational, it will play a crucial role in ensuring that major national projects and other undertakings are effectively implemented by those responsible. Equally, in the government the Minister of Finance especially myself and the Minister of Infrastructure, the Minister of Planning, we can all put our bids together to make sure that the Bureau does deliver all the plans and implementing mechanisms that we have had which will be put in place very soon. Unfortunately, we have not able to put into this House the legislation that will guide the mandates and operational functions of the Bureau. But I can assure the House that this will be done in due course.

The Bureau's philosophy is a major shift in paradigm in public policy planning and implementation. It is a new thing. It does reflect a certain degree of political will and so let us give it a try, give it a chance, and I am sure we should be able to get it working to enhance this country to a new threshold of planning and implementing government policy directives.

With these remarks, I wish to once again thank all Members of Parliament for their contribution to the debate on this motion and on all other matters that this House has deliberated on during the last two or three weeks. I also thank the Clerk and staff of the National Parliament once again for your dedicated efforts in ensuring that our meetings are conducted and done in an orderly and professional manner. With those, I would like to beg to

move that at the adjournment of Parliament on Wednesday the 13th April 2011, the present meeting shall be concluded and Parliament shall then stand adjourned sine die.

(applause)

The motion for Parliament to sine die agreed to.

Mr. Speaker: Honourable Members before I adjourn Parliament in accordance with the earlier resolution of this House, please allow me to say a few words.

Honourable Members, we have now reached the conclusion of the second Meeting of the Ninth Parliament and I wish to formally thank the Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister, Ministers, the Leader of the Opposition and the supervising Leader of the Independent group and all Members of Parliament for your valuable contributions to issues debated in this meeting over the last couple of weeks. It is a pleasure indeed to see the House in its full capacity having all constituencies represented. As a parliament, it is most appropriate to have all constituencies represented at this meeting. I wish once again to congratulate the honourable Members for Shortlands and Mbaegu/Asifola, who have been elected by your respective constituencies to have them represented in this honourable House.

A number of activities or businesses of the House have transpired at this meeting, which I believe Parliament has achieved several goals through these activities in this meeting, the second meeting of the Ninth Parliament. We have paid tribute to our fallen comrade, the late Toswell Kaua. We have expressed our sympathy to the people of Japan and New Zealand over the destruction caused by earthquakes in both countries and a subsequent tsunami in the case of Japan. We administer oaths for the two new members who have been elected in the bye-elections. We have passed the 2011 Appropriation Bill and the 2010 Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.2). We have debated and passed the motion by the Government to amend standing orders to increase the number of committees.

All of these have been possible through the cooperative efforts of Members of Parliament and its stakeholders. A lot of time, effort, energy, resources, skills and talents have been put together to ensure smooth conduct of Parliament business, and I salute you all for your hard work, involvement and contributions in this meeting.

I wish to acknowledge the work, commitment and dedication of the committees, specifically the Public Accounts Committees which held an inquiry into the 2011 Appropriation Bill 2011, as well as the 2010 Supplementary Appropriation Bill No.2 Bill. We can only appreciate the magnitude of such an inquiry and applaud the effort in bringing all ministries to account for their budget submissions and making inquiries. The writing of the report based on the inquiry is a big task. The Public Accounts Committee has done a fine job and was able to bring out issues of concerns connected to the budget and presented its report in time. I thank the Public Accounts Committee for an excellent job well done.

Conducting an inquiry into the motion by the Government to increase the number of parliamentary standing committees has been another job of the Parliamentary House Committee. The Parliamentary House Committee was only given limited time, and so I

congratulate the Committee for its inquiry and report. I thank members of the Parliamentary House Committee and stakeholders concerned for carrying out the inquiry into the motion by the Government.

At this juncture, honourable Members, may I express one area of concern which emerged from time to time in relation to the committees' work, which is an ongoing issue as the Member for Small Malaita has rightly indicated is the lack of quorum. Lack of quorum prevents committees from proceeding into business, slows down the efficiency of committee work, and destroys the morale of dedicated committee members. I would like to encourage committee members to remain committed to the work of whatever committees you have been assigned or appointed to. Parliament will soon increase its standing committees and there will be need for committed members to carry out the work of Parliament.

As you are all aware, yesterday the Parliament passed a motion by the government to amend the Standing Orders to provide for three additional parliamentary standing committees. The passage of the resolution marks a milestone in the history of Parliament and its committee systems. It is proven the committees to be workable and to become an effective system and scrutiny enhancing Parliament in performing its constitutional oversight roles. The ball now rests on the government to fulfil its obligation to bring to completion the vision it started. That is to provide the resources and equipment for the establishment of these three new committees. In the months ahead or perhaps a few years ahead, this Parliament will see and mark improvements in the areas of health, education and national security. But that will only be the case if the committees are committed and equipped with people and resources. These three sectors namely health, education and security provide high turnout in the work force in terms of human resources and a large proportion of the budget.

I will leave this important responsibility to the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Public Service and the Government as a whole to take on from here. I would like to register here that I welcome the new committees. My office and team of staffs at the National Parliament are ready to work with the new committees when the necessary resources are provided.

In general, from my observations, the commitment of members of this House to the business of Parliament during the two and half weeks has been excellent. Many times during this meeting, Parliament went beyond 4:30pm in its deliberations. This shows the resilience, commitment and the will of members of Parliament to accomplish business assigned for the day, and contributions to the issues raised to the completion and the vision it started that is to provide the resources and equip for the establishment of these three new committees in the months ahead or perhaps a few years ahead this Parliament will see and mark these improvements in the areas of health, education and national security but that would only be the case if the committees are committed and equipped with the people and resources. These three committees at least three sectors, health, education and security provides a high turnout in the work force in terms of human resources and large proportion of the budget. I will leave this important responsibility to the Minister of Finance and Minister of Public Service and the government as a whole to take on from here. I would like to register here that I welcome the new committees. My office and team of staff of the National Parliament are ready to work with the new committees when resources are provided.

In general from my observation, the commitment of members of this House to the business of Parliament during the two and half weeks has been excellent. Many times during this meeting, Parliament went beyond 4.30pm in its deliberations. This shows the resilience, commitment and will of Members of Parliament to accomplish business assigned for the day and contribute to issues raised. Thank you very much indeed for your contributions.

Honourable Members, the dedication of all stakeholders who are involved in ensuring the smooth conduct of the business of the House had been great. And I wish to acknowledge and thank the Clerk to Parliament and her staff at Parliament for the great support demonstrated in this meeting. Thank you Clerk and Members of the National Parliament!

Government officials in the ministries have also assisted their Ministers during the tiring days of deliberating on the budget and even appeared before the Public Accounts Committee. I would like to thank them also for the support rendered.

Once again, thank you very much indeed for your kind words to the Chair, the Clerk and staff of the National Parliament. As you will all be going home to visit your people, remember honourable Members of Parliament that we are going towards the holy week and it is time for prayer and not too many celebrations, after all there is the great work that we have just passed, the national budget of the country. I wish you all a productive visit to your people and good work for the remaining months ahead of this year.

In accordance with the earlier resolution of the House in pursuant of section 10(5) of the Standing Orders, the House is now adjourned sine die.

The House adjourned sine die at 7.40pm