

# NATIONAL PARLIAMENT OF SOLOMON ISLANDS

Monday, 6 November 2017

The Speaker, Mr Adjilon Nasiu, took the Chair at 09.49 am

Prayers.

*Business of the House*

## ATTENDANCE

All were present with the exception of the

*Motions*

## MOTION OF NO CONFIDENCE

**“THAT THE NATIONAL PARLIAMENT OF SOLOMON ISLANDS  
RESOLVES IT HAS NO CONFIDENCE IN THE PRIME MINISTER**

**The SPEAKER:** Honorable Members, let me explain why the Motion appears on today's Order Paper. On the 29<sup>th</sup> of October 2017, my office received the Motion of No Confidence in the Prime Minister by the Leader of the Independent Group. The Motion has met its required seven (7) clear days on Notice Paper, and this morning my office has been informed that the mover would like to introduce the Motion.

It is a matter of parliamentary practice that a Motion of No Confidence takes precedence over other parliamentary business or items of business that can or ought to be set down on the Order Paper for that particular sitting. This means that a Motion of No Confidence must be dealt with as soon as possible and it may be required to be debated on days allotted for government business and not necessarily on Fridays only which is Private Members day.

The reason for this practice is twofold. First, a Motion of No Confidence against the Prime Minister implies amongst other things that the Government does not have the numerical strength to govern, and this is a serious issue in which Parliament must deal with at the first available opportunity. If there is doubt as to the majority of support commanded by the Prime Minister in this House, it must be tested as soon as possible because to have a minority government administering the affairs of the country would run contrary to the established principles of majority rule, which is a rudimentary basis upon which our constitution and parliamentary

democracy is premised on. I do not think this would be in the best interest of this nation.

Secondly, if there is clearly a lack of support for the Prime Minister, this implies that the required numerical strength is not on the government side but on the opposing side of the House. The situation where the opposing side commands the required majority could lead to deliberate hindrance of government business on the floor of Parliament and thereby stalling parliamentary business. That would not be a good situation to be in because the Government must be able to continue implement its policies and deliver services to the people of this country and Parliament must be able to continue its business.

I now call on the honorable Member for North East Guadalcanal and Leader of the Independent Group to move his Motion.

**Hon. DEREK SIKUA** (*North East Guadalcanal—Leader of the Independent*) (09:53): Mr Speaker, before I move the Motion, and with your indulgence, may I take this opportunity to ask the honorable Prime Minister to assess his chances of successfully defending this motion.

As you can see, this side of the House has the numerical strength of 27 Members of Parliament to pass the motion. With that, and in the interest of maintaining honor and credibility in our national leadership that I kindly and humbly ask the member of Parliament for East Choiseul to resign as Prime Minister of Solomon Islands. This would maintain the integrity of our democracy given the numerical strength has shifted to this side of the House. This means the Prime Minister no longer enjoys the support of the majority of Members of Parliament.

In the political history of this country, all past prime ministers who have been placed in the same situation have always opted for the option to step down, and I might add including the former minister for development planning and aid coordination and Member of Parliament for South New Georgia/Rendova/Tetepare who is with us here on this side of the House. In this regard, I would like to give this opportunity to the Prime Minister to reassess his support and do the same by resigning as Prime Minister on the floor of Parliament.

**The SPEAKER:** Honorable Members, the honorable Member of Parliament for North East Guadalcanal, the Leader of the Independent Group has moved that the National Parliament resolves that it has no confidence....

**Hon. DEREK SIKUA:** Point of Order, Mr Speaker! I have not moved my motion. I am simply giving the opportunity to my good friend the honourable Prime Minister to resign on the floor of Parliament. I would like you to give him the opportunity to say something in reply to what I have just said.

**Hon. MANASSEH SOGAVARE** (*East Choiseul—Prime Minister*) (09:56): With all due respect to the request by the Leader of the Independent Group asking the Prime Minister to resign, the nation needs to hear what their Prime Minister has done very wrong and the reason as to why they have moved across and wanted to move this motion of no confidence against him.

With all due respect to the request by the mover, we are not talking about small positions like shopkeepers at the back yard of China Town. We are talking about the Prime Minister of this nation and the people of this country must hear the reason why this motion is moved. So I will not resign, I will face this motion.

**Hon. DEREK SIKUA:** Mr Speaker, I rise to move the motion standing in my name in today's order paper. I move that the National Parliament of Solomon Islands resolves that it has no confidence in the Prime Minister.

Mr Speaker, first of all, I would like to thank you for understanding, especially for your letter dated the 3<sup>rd</sup> of November 2017 regarding this particular motion of no confidence and government business and to have to this motion set down on the order paper and debated this morning, today being a normal government business day.

Indeed, your ruling shows that you have the interest and welfare of all Solomon Islanders at heart. Your letter requires the honourable Prime Minister to concur and if he has done so, I also thank him for his concurrence in this regard.

Let me at the outset say that this is the second motion I have moved against the same Prime Minister. I would like to mention right at the beginning that I do not have any ill feelings or any personal ill feelings against the Prime Minister, and I hope that his family and his people of East Choiseul do not see this motion in that light.

As you maybe aware, more than a week ago, nine members of the Government backbench and seven senior ministers from the Democratic Coalition for Change Government (DCCG) under the leadership of the honourable Prime Minister have resigned to join forces with the Opposition Group and the Independent Group of MPs. We, the 27 MPs sitting on this side of the House now recognize ourselves as one group, and we have committed ourselves to form a recognized position as a potential government.

At the outset, I wish to assure our people that each of us concerned MPs sitting on this side of the House have not taken this decision and course of action without proper consideration and reflection on what has happened to our country over the last three years under the leadership of the current Prime Minister and MP for East Choiseul. Indeed, in confronting our important constitutional responsibilities and

challenges, I cannot emphasize the importance of our leadership to this country and our responsibility to build this nation in unity.

On this note, I would like to add that as an Independent nation, Solomon Islands has had parliamentary democracy for the past 39 years, and we and the nation as a whole hope and pray that the events of recent weeks have not tested our commitment to the values of parliamentary democracy but have entrenched them more deeply. The nation has called upon us as national leaders to act to resolve the current political impasse.

As elected representatives of our people, we are very well aware of the beliefs, needs, aspirations and circumstances of the people we represent. So we must now exercise sound judgment on their behalf and take to our hearts their concerns. As important political leaders and as elected political leaders of our beloved country we must put the interest of our people and the nation first.

I want to categorically state here on behalf of the MPs that have resigned from the government a week ago that they did not cross over to this side of the House because they oppose the Anti-Corruption Bill. No, Mr Speaker.

As a group now and a potential government, we are all committed to supporting the Anti-Corruption Bill. As we are all aware, the Anti Corruption Bill has gone through the first reading, and we as a group are all committed to ensuring its passage on the floor of this House.

The Democratic Coalition for Change Government (DCCG) has indeed intended to affect real change in the policy framework document when it assumed power in late 2014. I was part of that government but did not last long; I only lasted eight months, and I left in October 2015 with a group of my friends. So I can tell you that the intended policies to affect real change in the policy framework document of the government are well focused.

At this point in time, three years on, we seemed to be going around in circles. Like I said three years on it has become apparent that most of the good and well intended national policies will not be achieved under the current leadership. This is because I believe we have lost direction because we seem to be bogged down with matters that have little to do with advancing the affairs of Solomon Islands as a nation.

Why? Like I said I was a former minister in the DCCG, I was minister for education working under the current leadership. We came in late 2014, but by April of 2015, I sent a text to my good friend, the honorable Prime Minister, and told him that I am very uncomfortable about some of the things that are going on. I mentioned to him that some of my colleagues who are still sitting on the other side are very uncomfortable about his nephew coming to the office and starting to linger around the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister replied my text and said 'you stop

threatening me'. You are doing exactly the same thing that was done by yourself, the Member for Fataleka, the MP for Aoke/Langalanga have done in 2007.

These are some of the things we are hearing. My colleague Members of Parliament who have just left the Government a week ago will attest to this fact when they contribute to the debate on this motion.

The issue at hand is leadership, and this is an issue which I have raised in my 2007 Motion of No Confidence against the same Prime Minister. I have read the transcript of his debate in reply, and I know what he is going to say. I will listen to what the Prime Minister has to say about his style of leadership. But that is one of the things that comes to the fore of this issue that there is dislike of certain individuals in being our Prime Minister, the style of leadership and even the character. Leadership is something that cannot really be measured objectively in terms of how a person leads. It is a subjective matter, but I know that because of our cabinet system of Government, there are conventions that one has to follow in terms of the need to consult on matters of national interest. However, in the case of the current Prime Minister, he has opted to rely on the advice from individuals and not the advice of his ministers who put and keep him in power.

What I have been hearing therefore points to the fact that this country definitely needs good leadership, and the present Prime Minister cannot provide the kind of leadership the country needs. As demonstrated in the statements I have just made, he is incapable of continuing to provide sound leadership that will enable Solomon Islands to progress and prosper. Therefore, I strongly disagree with the negative statements made by some people regarding the capacity of our group to lead this country.

As you can see, our group boasts three former prime ministers and many well experienced, well qualified, long serving Members of Parliament who are committed to working together to take this country forward in the remaining life of this Parliament, even if it is just for over a year, and that definitely excludes the Member for East Guadalcanal, you will always remain there. Therefore, it is my firm belief that if this country is to progress and prosper we have to change the leadership.

I started to feel despite the fact that when we elected the honorable Prime Minister to be our candidate and to lead the DCCG, he said that he is going to be a changed person, and he kept on saying that. And in 2015, during his 60<sup>th</sup> birthday which we his ministers attended; thank you for that invitation at the Cowboys Grill, he personally thanked me for teaching him some very good lessons in 2007. In more than one occasion, he declared that he is a changed person, he is a different person that you are looking at now.

But by October of 2015, I noticed and I felt that is not the case because my good friend, the Prime Minister is forever suspicious of anyone who stands up to him or differs from his point of view. Once he is fixated on a conspiracy, his judgment inevitably becomes subjected to it. My greatest sadness is that all too often the Prime Minister sees it fit to lower himself to submit to advice from individuals with dubious characters, incompetence rather than listening to advice from his ministers who put and keep him in power.

I am sure the backbenchers and senior ministers who have resigned to join this side of the House more than a week ago will substantiate this argument in their debate that the Prime Minister seems to be listening to outsiders in making major decisions. He is not consulting his ministers on matters of national importance. And least of all, on issues to do with the sacking, reshuffling of his cabinet ministers, which inline with the Political Party Integrity Act should have been done in consultation with party presidents.

Here I have asked the president of the United Democratic Party (UDP) and the People's Alliance Party on matters to do with sacking and reshuffling of ministers or backbenchers in cabinet sub-committees. They said not once did he consult them. They would receive copies of letters that were sent to the ministers or backbenchers he is sacking. That is not consultation.

The time is now or the nation will continue to suffer the consequences. I therefore, call on Members on the other side and my former colleagues, my very good colleagues, some of them my wantok; four of them on the other side to be true leaders of their people and this country by making independent decisions without being coerced or intimidated by corrupt characters, loggers, miners - these kind of people. And the Member of Parliament for East Guadalcanal, see how you treat the Member of Parliament for Temotu/Nende, you treat him like a prisoner by locking him in the room in the hotel. He really wants to come to me but you locked him up like he is a small child.

I go back to the point again of the Prime Minister appointing his relatives and cronies as political appointees on high salaries at taxpayers' expense with no regard for qualification or experience for the positions they are appointed to, and this runs against the grain of good governance.

The Honourable Prime Minister is hypocritical when he preaches to everyone else about good governance, accountability and transparency, and this in his view are mandatory for everybody else but only optional for himself. What qualifications and experience does the Honourable Prime Minister's nephew who occupies the position of Chief of Staff in the Prime Minister's Office posses? In the Grand Coalition for Change Government, the GCCG, he was appointed to a similar position as Director General at that time and for what. I ask the Prime Minister to

tell this House what sort of qualifications does his nephew have. In Brisbane where he lives, I have some reliable sources from there telling me that in Brisbane he only lives on the dole as well as selling marijuana along the streets. That is what he is doing there. Coming here, I do not know but he seems to be a very important person. I want the Prime Minister to explain his lack of transparency to this House when he replies.

I still believe that the Prime Minister still lacks transparency about his private financial dealings demonstrated in his lack of sound judgment. I know I have taken this matter up with the Leadership Code Commission and the Leadership Code Commission has replied to both of us but I am still not satisfied that that investigation is fully taken and conducted.

The Prime Minister has to tell us if he has been using his position and his office as Prime Minister for personal gains because this is wrong and corrupt as a national leader. This is the problem because if you are doing things like that and do not see them as wrong, then that is worse. I can see that every time we touch on these issues, the Prime Minister is always very defensive. On one occasion he wanted to fight with the Member for North West Guadalcanal but lucky we managed to stop them. But he really wanted to fight. Their hands are almost flying in the air.

*Mr Douglas Ete interjecting: where was that?*

**Hon. Derek Sikua:** This happened in the Cabinet room when we raised issues like this. This shows a person who defends wrong and will intimidate everyone else to say that it is right when it is clearly in his personal interest. No! Enough of this, my good friend, the Prime Minister.

I am not going to talk very long because those on this side of the House would also like to contribute. Like I said, I know I have taken this matter up with the LCC, but I am still of the view that this issue, the suspicion of people is still not being thoroughly investigated.

Those are the things I would like to say on the situation where the honorable Prime Minister has recruited people where there are many Solomon Islanders who are well experienced, qualified and competent to do the work. In this case, the Prime Minister has created a situation where there are two sets of laws; one for him and his cronies and one for the rest of Solomon Islands.

The Prime Minister also needs to tell us the interest he has on mining companies. I have text records of the Prime Minister texting miners telling them about what is happening about a particular issue in terms of what level it has been pushed through government systems, especially at cabinet level. I want the Prime Minister to tell us what is happening to the mining, especially on the bauxite on Rennell and

what interest he has there. I might also extend that to the nickel mining on Isabel. The PM and the Member for East Guadalcanal.

They were trying to give licenses to Asian companies who are just their cronies. They removed Sumitomo and Exiom and then give it to their friends to do mining on Isabel. My good friend, the Minister of Environment should know about this. And I am wondering why you are still sitting on that side. You should come and sit on this side .

The Tina River Hydro. I keep calling the Member of Parliament for East Guadalcanal because his hands extending there also. There are shareholding arrangements there. Whose interests are we trying to serve? Where are we driving this thing to? Again, I think we are trying to make friends and the people we associated with to have the shareholding. What is happening to ICSI who holds shares on behalf of the people of this country? How many shares does ICSI have? I would like us to explain these things.

When dealing with major projects like that, some times we do not sign them here in Honiara, but we have to fly to Brisbane to sign all those things in secret. Why is that?

The Member of Parliament for East Guadalcanal, just two days after he was appointed, he went to Korea. Who sent him there and what did he go to Korea for? That is why everything went wrong. Big national projects like that, it seems like we are driving them here so that we can have some going into our own pockets, the commission part or something like that. And when you trace these people, they are the people who are just behind the Prime Minister. I do not know what the Prime Minister is trying to do.

The way I see our Prime Minister is behaving is like he is trying to cement support and get enough money to build his power base for him to come back in the next government, his new party, SOCREED maybe or maybe another one. I want to know Prime Minister, what is your involvement in trying to direct these things to serve your own interest? I want to know and so does the nation.

It is not just mining, it is not just Tina River hydro, and your former ministers are also going to say some things too. You speak, they speak and you continue to argue and that is straight forward. The mover will just sit back and relax. I will not go into those things because they do not know. I have left you a long time ago and being in the independent, it seems like I have not been keeping track of national issues but they are going to tell you.

There are other national projects that I will leave it there because I know my colleagues will want to share their thoughts on. But as you can see, I am trying my

best not to mention bad things here because I want to keep this debate as civilized and friendly as possible.

And I do not need to say a lot because my other colleagues will also debate because the number is on this side so why waste my time.

I have just said to you Mr Speaker that I am not going to talk long because I will have a second chance as the mover of this motion after the Prime Minister replies and after others have debated to wind up the debate. I can say more things in my wind up debate but for the time being, thank you very much.

**The SPEAKER:** Honourable Members, the Honourable Member for North East Guadalcanal and Leader of the Independent Group has moved that the National Parliament resolves it has no confidence in the Prime Minister.

Before I allow debate, I wish to remind all Members to adhere to the rules of debate when making their contributions. I will not allow any comments or interference which in my view is in direct breach of the Standing Orders, particularly Standing Order 36. Members will debate in a responsible and professional manner and avoid diminishing the integrity and reputation of this Honourable House.

**Hon. PETER AGOVAKA** (*Central Guadalcanal—Minister for Communication and Aviation*) (10:35): Firstly, I would like to thank my colleague, the Leader of Independent and Member for North East Guadalcanal for moving this motion bringing up issues for our people and the country could hear.

In fact, we have agreed that we will only allow the Prime Minister to talk but after listening to my brother the mover of the motion, I feel that I need to talk also. The urge to speak comes out very strongly and that is why I am standing up now.

When we started this DCCG Government, the policies have always remain the same. Some of us suffered, all of us suffered when we started this government, including those on the other side of the House. I see there is nothing wrong with the Government, there is nothing wrong with the policies of the government and there is nothing wrong with the implementation document or the work programs that we have. In fact, they are all good programs.

Certainly, there are problems with the economy of our country and the financial implications that go with it. On Monday last week you would recall the Minister for Finance telling us the state of the economy of our country. And that is the truth about the state of the economy of our country. If anybody is to answer the question on the state of the economy of the country, the new minister was only there for two weeks. My colleague, the former minister for finance who is on the other side of the House now has been there for three years, so he should be more well versed with the state of the economy of the country. My colleague from West Are, Are has only been there for two weeks now and he informed the House appropriately. He did

not want to fool us around but frankly told us about the state of the economy of our country. When people were asking about the state of our economy, we have a very serious cash flow and that is why we need to redo the budget to reflect the priorities of the Government.

When we created this government we really love this government; some of us did because of the programs and the policies it has. Until last week when this government turned sour, so much so that our colleagues resigned and joined the other side.

The Leader of Independent raised issues regarding the leadership style of the Prime Minister and the recruitment of the PM's nephew as the chief of staff. Those things have nothing to do with policies and nothing to do with how the government runs. If this is just a personal vendetta, then those colleagues that have moved should have sorted this out in Caucus. Why did you move out? You should have come to Caucus so that we sorted this out. If you are saying you do not want the PM because of his leadership style, then we should have sorted it out in Caucus. You will not find it on this side of the House as it is just within us. And if you do not want the chief of staff we should have just sorted it out in our caucus meetings. You cannot find your answer outside of Caucus or even Cabinet.

The Prime Minister is the head of the executive, and it is his role to ensure the government functions according to its policies and implements according to its policy documents. And if ministers do not perform, then certainly they have to be reshuffled or terminated because what we wanted is for the ministries to deliver. Deliver on the budget and deliver on the policies that are there. And if you do not perform, then you have to be reshuffled.

My colleague Member for North East Guadalcanal when he was prime minister also sacked ministers. When he terminated the minister for commerce, he recalled the Member for Central Guadalcanal to replace the minister. This was just three days before parliament dissolves and we went into caretaker mode after that. And I am thankful for this because I will always be there to support any government. I will always be there, whether it is three days, three months or three years before the house is dissolved I will be there.

Sacking is the prerogative of prime ministers as to how they see the performance of their ministers. He is the CEO of the executive house, just like CEOs of business houses that must ensure that particular institution runs well. And if it does not run well, the CEO expects his matching orders. The Member for North East Guadalcanal knows very well as he was once a prime minister and he also did the same thing.

In terms of not consulting, I have difficulty believing this, my colleague mover, because the two people that our prime minister always first consulted are the former

Minister for Finance and the former Minister for MDPAC. These are our two most senior ministers. The PM always consulted them. He also consulted with party leaders. The DCCG comprised of only three parties - the UDP, Kandere and PAP, and I know that our Prime Minister always consulted them on issues that were raised here. May be there are some issues raised by the Leader of Independent that the PM may not have consulted others on but I always believe he consulted others about it.

On reshuffling and sacking of ministers, consultation with parties always happens before they were made. The issues of change of leadership again, we should be just discussing my colleague and we do it as what we did for the former minister for MDPAC. It was the Caucus that told him to throw the towel, and he knows this very well without us coming back to the Opposition to talk about it with them. But we did it inside Caucus.

With deepest respect I have for the former Minister for MDPAC, he threw his towel on the floor of Parliament. We then went and regrouped and we formed the government headed by the former Member for Gizo/Kolombangara, he became the Prime Minister.

On the financial dealings of the Prime Minister, I myself too do not know very well about it and so I will not answer to that. But let me say that institutions in our country are there like the Leadership Code Commission and the Ombudsman. And if we pass the Anti Corruption Bill, it will be there as well. And if anything is wrong according to law, the Penal Codes are there to address allegations raised about the financial dealings of our Prime Minister.

I hope that any government that will form in two weeks time should table the Anti Corruption Bill so that we pass it. I am pleased to hear the Leader of the Independent Group said that the new government will support this bill. The first reading has been done and now it is set down for second reading.

In regards to the mining industry, I do not know much about nickel but when the minister deals with the nickel, and I do not know how he deals with it, but the minister is the custodian of that Act in his hand and he acts according to the Mines and Minerals Act. He is supposed to do things according to that Act. If he does things outside of the Act, then certainly something is not right there.

Mr Speaker, the former minister for mines used to sit down here and now he is your deputy. He knows exactly how to deal with the mining because he follows the Mines and Minerals Act. Is it true? It is true because he cannot act outside of that Act.

In regards to Tina Hydro, it is inside my constituency, the Central Guadalcanal Constituency. The only thing we talked about with the former minister of finance

was the shareholding arrangement. You would remember K-water wanted 51% and the government also wanted 51%. There was a hold up there because we did not agree with the shareholding arrangement. However, I am pleased to say that we have now agreed on it. But I am the one who is not quite happy with this.. I was not happy because some of us the landowners missed out, but that is something that can be sorted out. The MP for North East knows about this.

But the Tina Hydro Project is supported by the people and the share holding arrangement have set up now and the only thing that is not yet completed is the Power Purchase Agreement (PPA). That is what we are waiting for and Tina Hydro will go ahead.

When we, the politicians are in political wrangling, we are holding our country at ransom. Instead of us providing and delivering services through Education, Health and the provision of infrastructures, shipping and so forth, but it is our people who are feeling the pain about this and not us sitting down here in Parliament talking.

The decisions that we make affect the people of this nation. We cannot just sit here and do politics. Look at the state of our economy, it is bad. We need to work hard on it. Maybe the former minister for finance and the Member for Small Malaita know about the economy. He should know because he is also the former governor also.

*Mr Rick Houenipwela interjecting: Hey!*

**Hon. PETER AGOVAKA:** I withdraw the word!

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Please address the Speaker.

**Hon. PETER AGOVAKA:** I am addressing you now, Sir. Governor of Central Bank is what I meant.

I am not going to talk more because all of you know all the things I have said, those of you on the other side. of. I told my colleague, the Member for North West Guadalcanal to come to this side of the House so that we can work together.

*Mr Bodo Dettke interjecting: You come to this side.*

**Hon. PETER AGOVAKA:** What are you waiting for?

*Mr Bodo Dettke interjecting: Waiting for you.*

**Hon. PETER AGOVAKA:** This is too much. With these few remarks, I do not support the Motion. Thank you.

*(applause)*

**Hon. JEREMIAH MANELE** (*Hograno/Kial/Havulei—Leader of the Opposition*) (10:51): Thank you for giving the opportunity to also contribute to this important motion. I would like to acknowledge and thank the Leader of the Independent Group, the mover of this Motion, for taking the responsibility in exercising our democratic role and right to provide that check and balance on the Government. In the spirit of the Motion of No Confidence and for the information of our people in the country, an overthrow of a legitimate government is the last resort.

The Opposition Group takes the decision to support this motion seriously, because it is of paramount importance and necessity for the sake of our people. In this regard, the Opposition Group supports this Motion for the sake of those in the rural areas, who are struggling because of inadequate health and education services. For the women and children of this country. For the families who are struggling but can only provide one meal per day because of lack of employment. For the rural populace that continued to be neglected of false promises. For the environment that is destroyed on a daily basis due to logging and mining. For those who yearn for good governance. For the people of this country who are deprived of their God given resources. For the public servants whom the promise to providing a shelter and homes will only become nothing but empty words. For the women who are abused because of the difficulties faced and caused by bad decisions by us leaders. For those people who live in this country and feels that the Government has neglected. It is for your sake and that we have no option but to support this Motion of No Confidence.

Over the past week, some people in the country including those on the other side of the House have asked, what is the justification for a motion of no confidence at this time, when only 12 months remain. Some even commented that the Parliamentary Opposition is immature by accepting those who resigned from the Government and instead should have crossed over to join the Government to provide political stability.

For the last three years, the Opposition Group has provided constructive advice to the Government and played its oversight role in terms of serving as a check and balance on the Government. The Government including the Prime Minister have failed to take on board these views and advice.

We did not cross to join the Prime Minister of what is left of this Government at the first opportunity because we are mature leaders, and we must take time to assess the situation and decide what is best for the nation and not what is best for ourselves. That is the reason why we did not move across at the first opportunity. If we were fighting for ourselves, we would have gone across on day one to fill in the vacant ministerial posts.

Let me also remind us that there are only two sides in this House - the Government side and the Opposition side. So if one is running away from the government, he has no choice but to end up in the Opposition. The Opposition has no choice but to welcome them.

Actually, the Opposition Group which consists of six members of the Democratic Alliance Party(DAP) and one member of the People's First Party is quite prepared to remain in the Opposition come what may not. Therefore, the current political instability which eventuated in this Motion of No Confidence is not caused by the Opposition but caused by the Government itself.

Two years ago, I commented on the issue of motions of no confidence and I said that in this country the chances of motions of no confidence being successful will only happen if the break comes from within because those of us on the other side do not have the number. And I think this is what is happening right now.

Let us not forget, and I think the Leader of the Independent Group when moving the Motion has dwelt at length and has articulated the importance of leadership, especially with the Cabinet systems of government that we have adopted which is based on consultations and collective decision making and I would like to reemphasize the importance of that point.

It appears to me that there have been serious deficiencies in the process. We cannot blame anyone but the government itself. The Minister for Aviation just commented that he is not quite happy with the arrangements in regards to Tina Hydro, the landowner partnership or shares. It looks like there is no consultation as well. It is the responsibility of the Government to ensure consultations are undertaken to ensure that all partners, all stakeholders who have a stake in these developments are fully represented.

This Motion is justified, it has a legal basis, and as we have said it is a fundamental mechanism of check and balance in our democratic system of government so that our people listening out there must also understand.

A motion of no confidence is just like any other motions provided by sections 27, 28 and 29 of the Standing Orders. The underlying principle behind a motion of no confidence is noble. It is an integral part of the type of democracy we adopted when this country gained its independence.

Without such a provision in our laws, we will never have a healthy democracy. But instead tyranny. A motion of no confidence is simply a question which asks whether Members of Parliament have confidence on the leadership of a prime minister. Today in this Chamber, the question we are asking now is, do honourable Members in this House and people of this country still have confidence in the

leadership of our Prime Minister. It is a question that will answer itself during the course of our debate.

As the mover of the Motion indicated earlier in terms of numerical strength, the number is on this side of the House.

It is also important for our people to understand that the primary purpose for a motion of no confidence can be explained in twofold. First, it provides within the legislative process for a check and balance, as I have said, on the leadership of the government and whether those at the helm of government have the style of leadership this country wants. More importantly, a motion of no confidence ensures that the principle of majority rule as enshrined in our democracy must be held and respected. At the opening of our session, Sir, you did make reference to this very important point.

The opposition group, our group's decision to support this Motion of No Confidence is nothing personal against my good friend, the Prime Minister, nor his ministers. Rather, as mandated by the Constitution and as Her Majesty's Opposition, it is our responsibility to provide scrutiny and oversight on the government of the day. Once again, may I stress here that our beloved people must understand that we as an opposition are bound by our legislative mandate in providing that oversight and scrutiny to allow this Motion of No Confidence take place. Doing otherwise would be considered callous and negligence of duty on our part as an opposition.

Today I am grateful that as Leader of the Opposition to say that as leaders and a group forming the opposition, we have stood by our integrity and principles to carry out our duty to provide that oversight to the very end. Despite the political propositions, we have stood our fort to withstand all these. As a group and the two parties that formed the group, we have continued to uphold the principles of democracy to allow such a vote to be debated in this chamber. This has enabled us exercise our right in an amicable manner, rather than resorting to unthinkable options, such as violent demonstration, civil strike, revolts, coups and so forth, which would have done more damage to this beloved nation of ours.

I acknowledge some people's concerns regarding the question of why is it necessary to change the government at this eleventh hour. My simple answer is that whilst we all understand that nothing much can be done during this short period of time, the most important aspect people have overlooked is that if we allow things to continue as they are now, we will allow more and more damage to be done in the 16 months that are left of this 10<sup>th</sup> Parliament. For example, the economy is bleeding. We must stop the bleeding. So is it wise to take action now or sit back and allow more damage to be done in the remaining months under this leadership?

To add on, the duty of performing our roles as leaders to serve this country is not bound by time . Even during a year a lot of good things can be done. What we need is a competent government that works together as a team, a government that has the political will and focus, a government that has a heart to lead and serve the people of this country. And we do have leaders in this House who have a heart for our country and leaders who are dedicated and committed to take our economy and the country forward.

The mover of this motion has dwelt on the issue of the style of leaders so I will not dwell on that. But it is important that any government has to have a strong leadership that is founded on dedication and determination to serve the common cause and the common cause is the people of this country.

Since the DCC Government took office in 2014, one of the Government's flagship policies was national projects on Malaita. The Opposition fully support these policies and projects. The Minister for Aviation said that these are good policies, and I agree completely that they are good policies, they are good documents. The problem has been the implementation. There has been no progress.

We may have good policies, but if there is no implementation, then they are as good as they are on paper. The Opposition therefore acknowledges the importance of these national projects including those on Malaita. Unfortunately, nothing has been done or achieved to date or not much.

The DCC Government continues to give false hope to the people of this country and to the people of Malaita Province. During the launch of Malaita's new policy strategy document in Auki in March 2015, the Honorable Prime Minister assured our people of Malaita that the DCC Government is now focusing on Malaita Province. During his speech then, he assured the Premier, his executive members, and members of Malaita Provincial Assembly and the people of Malaita Province that his government is fully focused on Malaita Province. As the mover of this motion articulated, over the last two or three years we have lost focus, the government has lost focus, thus becoming more preoccupied with other issues than these very important national projects. It therefore means all these promises are nothing but political rhetoric.

I believe another justification for this motion today is the Prime Minister's continuing conflict of interest or association with foreign elements. I will not elaborate on this since the mover of this Motion has also at length made reference to these allegations. But we do have communications, for example, between the owner of NAZAR on the 29<sup>th</sup> of September 2015 as well as with the Prime Minister on matters relating to rental of the Prime Minister's homes at Lungga at that time. These concerns and these links with the private sector that the Prime Minister has engaged himself directly, questions the Prime Minister's personal interest with

these companies and also clouded his ethical standing and could demean the office that he occupies.

The other issue that has confronted the Prime Minister's leadership, as we know, is the issue of consulting with his cabinet before making major decisions that affects this country. It appears to me there has not been much consultation. Last week we have seen ministers and backbenchers leaving the government, and this is not the first time, but the second time. It shows that consultation that is part and parcel of the cabinet process should be given paramount importance in our government system.

In addition to the national projects I reiterated, you would recall that health workers, nurses and doctors in our National Referral Hospital have also attested, and this is an issue we have raised over and over again - the current state of our national hospital is in its worst state, like never experienced before. Our morgue is deteriorating, our theatres lack equipment, our hospitals and clinics lack medicine and so forth.

The lack of political will and direction for healthcare in this country is sickening. In September last year, for example, a total of six clinics in Malaita Province have closed down as a result of their appalling states. This was described in the media as the worst in 10 years. Similarly, the Manuopo Clinic in Temotu is in a very bad state, it is beyond repair. We need to build a new clinic for our people at Manuopo and other parts of the country who could be in a similar situation.

We have an estimated \$150million budget allocation for the improvement of clinical services nationwide as indicated in the DCCG's four-year government policy strategy. However, the lack of political will and negligence is putting lives at risk and denying basic health services to citizens in our rural areas.

This country needs a strong leadership and cabinet ministers that can address immediate concerns affecting our people.

Our Prime Minister has set the record of employing the most political appointees in the history of this country. I am told that the PAs are more than 50, even more than the number of MPs in Parliament itself. If I may ask, what tangible benefits the Government has gained through the majority of these Pas, you would agree with me that the answer is none. Just like the Prime Minister described his PAs sometimes back, most of his PAs are paper boys walking around with files looking busy, instead they are doing nothing. This Prime Minister has appointed more than 50 political appointees that costs tax payers of this country about \$12 to \$15 million per annum. This is a waste of public funds that could have been used to fix our roads that are now littered with potholes and to improve our hospitals and services for our people.

I would also like to take this opportunity to clear to the people of this country the Opposition Group's position on the Anti-Corruption Bill. Our position is very clear and that is we continue to support the Anti Corruption Bill and other related legislations that will come before the House. It is also critical that we strengthen existing accountability institutions such as the Ombudsman Office, the Leadership Code Commission and the Auditor General's Office. These bodies play a key role in the fight against corruption. Their task can only be effective if we adequately resource them. The fight against corruption must start from within, from us leaders.

The litany of actions and activities outlined by the Leader of the Independent Group when he moved the motion earlier does not go well with the office of the Prime Minister. Even allegations of MPs receiving lucrative offers last week after the mass resignation of ministers and the involvement of logging companies in our domestic politics really undermines our efforts to combat corruption. The question is, are these activities not corruption, then how do we define corruption?

Going forward, the events of last week and the Motion of No Confidence that we are now debating once again reminds us of the need to review and strengthen the Political Parties Integrity Act to provide much needed political stability in our country. But at the end of the day it is entirely up to each of us, Members of Parliament to make the right decision, taking into account the need to maintain our integrity and credibility as leaders. We must also respect each other's right to decide which faction of group one decides to join or associate with. Remember freedom of association and opinion are fundamental rights enshrined in our Constitution.

What has happened over the last few days, some of those actions and activities have actually broken our own rules and regulations in our country. For example, the situation at the airport where the vehicle was driven inside without the permission of the Civil Aviation Authorities. A Member of Parliament was being kept hostage, almost. We are acting not as leaders but as children.

The next government in whatever form or shape must be focused and ensure it delivers on its primary responsibility of providing goods and services and in growing the economy to provide income and jobs for our people. We must not provide lip service to our people.

Before I resume my seat, allow me to acknowledge and thank all Solomon Islanders in the country and also abroad for your support and understanding in allowing us leaders to debate this motion of no confidence without duress or pressure. This is a role that we have to play and fulfill in the true spirit of our democracy.

I also appeal to our citizens to remain calm and peaceful and let our leaders proceed to form the next government as required under our constitution and democratic processes. With these few remarks I support the motion and resume my seat.

**Hon BRADLEY TOVOSIA** (*East Guadalcanal—Minister for Mines, Energy and Rural Electrification*) (11:14): Thank you for allowing me to speak. We have decided not to talk, however, since the mover mentioned me as the former minister of mines, I have to respond.

I would like to thank the Member for North East Guadalcanal for moving this motion. I would like to say to him that he has been used twice, he admitted to this earlier on today. Is that the only reason for this motion? It is to hold this country at ransom? The Member for North East Guadalcanal is my brother, he is a doctorate and a very professional man and I have all the respect for him. But today as I was listening to him moving the motion, he is belittling himself, very small. This country should not be going down like this.

*Hon. Derek Sikua interjecting:* Point of order, Mr Speaker. The MP for North East Guadalcanal and Leader of the Independent Group does not belittle himself by moving this motion. It is my right as a Member of Parliament representing my people and a right I derive from the Constitution. Thank you very much.

**Hon BRADLEY TOVOSIA:** Mr Speaker, I am saying that because I have all the respect for him and I want him to speak a little bit bigger, big according to his capacity. That is what I meant. But okay, I withdraw those comments.

I was listening to him and I cannot find any good reason for moving this motion. They are not white. The Minister for Aviation rightly mentioned that these issues should have been dealt with in Caucus and in Cabinet, so why bring it up here? The Prime Minister will speak for himself, defending this motion.

I would like to say that this is my second term in office, and the first time I came into parliament, I was a strong supporter of honourable Danny Philip, the MP for North New Georgia. I am his strong supporter and I can tell you what we have been doing during his time. I am one live evidence. Even the former prime minister, Gordon Darcy, I am also one live evidence during his time. We should not come and tell lies to parliament but tell the truth. It is not good to say something that is not true here in Parliament. Live evidence, live evidence.

They mentioned my brother, honorable Commins Mewa. He has been living in my house for free for two solid years when he resigned. Who made him to resign? It was some people from that other side as well. They asked him to resign and so he went to live in my house where I am keeping him as a true brother until today. It is not only because of politics that we find people to go to the other side. Not so. It is not like that. A true friend is someone who takes care of someone in rainy weather or bad times. Not because of political reason that you go looking for people here and there. I told my brother, the Member for Temotu Nende to stay with me until both of us physically die with this side of the House. That is the real story. I want to make it clear here so that everybody can hear it.

I went to take up the post as Minister for Mines for only one and half months. That ministry is dead one, purely died one, nothing is happening there. The people working there are not doing any work. Officers have been drinking alcohol during official hours.

What is that kind? You as the minister have to drive the ministry. I am sorry for saying this but I have to say it so that people can hear the real story of what is happening in the ministries. The Ministry of Energy and Mines is a dead ministry. I went in there, called a meeting with the directors, officials and told them to look throughout the ministry and find out what has been going on there.

On the issue of nickel which the mover of the motion talked about, I sent a team over to Isabel to find out the real landowners and ask them what they want. That is what dialogue is, which we are talking about. We called a meeting here in Honiara, called a tripod where the three Members of Parliament for Isabel Province attended, except for the Minister for Environment because he went for an official trip overseas.

I have been trying my best. The act for the Ministry of Mines is there, it is a standard act. The resolutions you have heard about as the tripod which people have been talking about so much are just things in the Act that we are following. Even in the tripod and I have told the tripod that it is just a resolution that I will ensure that whoever gets the license must consider what you want. There is why I am the former minister for mines. To give it to the friends you have mentioned, I am sorry, not so. The board must meet. That is the government's problem. Any legal thing to do must go through the board meeting. That is why there is a call for the meeting and there was a meeting. The outcome of the meeting is not what the government wants. It is not according to the policy of the government. Why is there no money in the country? All of us must be blamed for this.

The former Minister for Finance and MDPAC are over here. They have been part of the government. My brother, the Deputy Prime Minister over there has been part of the government, so what are we talking about here? We have to shoulder this. It is in our court and we have to take it, we have to find a way for it.

I am a bit sorry when people just tarnish us like this. The Tina Hydro project - the second day I was appointed minister I went overseas. What, have I been bribed? Sorry my wantok, the mover of the motion, that is too small for a person like me. I am just a person making a garden from the village. I cannot take it, it is too small. I go there to ensure Tina Hydro is opened. The Minister for Aviation was trying to say that the issue is tariff and not a shareholding issue. We want to reduce the tariff. That is what I want.

We talked about this, the former minister for finance. Some of the issues which I as the former minister for mines and the former minister for finance talked about are

issues of Solomon Water and Solomon Power which can be quickly done as it has been lying there for ages. A question has been raised here as well on why the board is not established yet. It is because these two ministers cannot work together. Self opinion where somebody wants to be in there. They did not see it as a job. I think this is why this country cannot move forward because this kind of attitude is inside of us Members of Parliament. This is true, I am telling you now. I can agree with a lot of things the Leader of Opposition was talking about. Good, we can always agree on those. But to bring this country just because of these reasons is not on, and I stand not to support this motion.

**Hon. MANASSEH MAELANGA** (*East Malaita—Minister for Home Affairs*) (11:22): Thank you for allowing me to contribute to this motion. First, I would like to thank the mover of this motion, the Leader of the Independent group for moving the motion.

In supporting this motion, I would like to share a few thoughts. I would like to share some of the thoughts that brought me this far which I believe are the reasons for my actions which the general public is curious to hear. I would like to make it clear here that I am not here to pinpoint anyone.

First, I would want to tell the House and the good people of Solomon Islands and my good people of East Malaita constituency that I did not move to this side of the house because of the Anti Corruption Bill.

As you all know, as a former Deputy Prime Minister of the DCC Government, I was the one who received the Anti-Corruption Bill petition in front of the Prime Minister's Office when I was acting Prime Minister when the substantive Prime Minister was on overseas trip. I assured the Civil Society group that brought the petition that the Bill will return to Parliament. And as the Prime Minister mentioned on the floor of Parliament, the Bill was returned as it needs to be looked into again on some of the recommendations made by the Bills Committee. That is why it was brought here, it will go through Caucus and then Cabinet and then it will come back to Parliament. The Anti-Corruption Bill is not the reason why I resigned from the Government side. There is no issue with the Anti-Corruption Bill. I want to say this so that the good people of this country and my own people of East Malaita constituency can hear it.

Let me begin with a very simple notion. The perspective of democracy - being elected into Parliament is a noble act. I remember getting ready for my first campaign and I can still remember getting the news that I have been elected to the highest house of the land. I know that most of you also remember those moments. I fully understand then that I had changed from an ordinary person to an aligned of my own being, not knowing the greater world of politics and its maestros of society. I entered the world of Solomon Islands politics, however, I already know

that leadership and governed mentality can shape the way we perceive things, especially in looking at the fabrics of development from the eyes of an ordinary person - a view somewhat distorted by mere politics in a nation so small but so important.

Allow me to engage clearly on our actions today. I am democracy, you are democracy and we are all democracy. If we are to name each other by the way we think, we may end up like the Chinese where there will be thousands of Bruce Lees, and you could not be able to tell which one is Bruce and which one is Lee. In other words, sometimes we really need to call a spade a spade.

My good people of Solomon Islands, our country lacks progress. It is held back by trivial matters, things that do not give progress to both how we think and how we do things. Together both questions are about leadership. There is a valid question about leadership.

I have been in this House for more than two terms. I have served a full term as Deputy Prime Minister under two different prime ministers; the former Minister for Aid Coordination and Member for South New Georgia/Rendova/Tetepare and the former Member of Parliament for Gizo/Kolombangara, Gordon Darcy Lilo. Prime Minister Phillip was voted in as prime minister and was brought down also in this very chamber.

The former Member for Gizo/Kolombanagara, former Prime Minister was also elected under this very roof. He completed his term and registered himself as one of the prime ministers of this nation. Unfortunately, my good friend Lilo did not make it through the general elections, hence his absence in this Chamber today nevertheless was replaced by another abled leader, the now Member of Parliament for Gizo/Kolombangara.

Having served two prime ministers, anyone could distinguish the difference styles, priorities and challenges these prime ministers do face; issues that warrant national priority and those are not so important. I joined this current Prime Minister in anticipation that the leadership issues raised a few years ago should have changed, and my good friend the current Prime Minister could have taken a different path, a brighter and a reformed path. This seems not to have occurred.

In 2007, a motion was moved in this very House against this very Prime Minister. Glancing through Hansard, it seems the very reasons for that Motion is repeated again in 2017. This tells me our leadership has no changed and we have not progressed well.

A fundamental principle in Solomon Islands leadership is to listen to what our people are not saying. In short, you have to listen and engaged too in an

equilibrium whereby normal things that attract are dealt with in a manner acceptable.

The rise and fall of various prime ministers was based on the same argument that had riddled the policies of this nation over the years. The argument remains that we are running a government and not a one man show. The argument that there is a fine line between the wrongs and responsibilities of an elected prime minister as expected by the laws of the land as opposed to the attitude of a prime minister supported together by a group of leaders is a crucial one and energy that responds to itself in ensuring there is consistency, fairness and transparency in the leadership. There are other leaders in the cycle, leaders ever present to provide that necessary support towards the governing of this nation.

In other words, together to we lead as leaders in the government with the allocated ministerial responsibility to each leader and we band together in Cabinet and Caucus. This is a very unique bond tied by politics and the progressives of democracy. This is a very unique and role of the time is that when one of us is not performing, we have to support each other. If we are not happy with another leader, we consult. We ensure that proper dialogue is accorded to issues that warrant it.

A Prime Minister is first amongst the equals, meaning we are all equals as mandated by our electorates. But first as being elected by Members of Parliament to be the head of Cabinet. The unseen rule here is that all Members of Parliament are therefore equal in this honourable House. Anything short of this should not be entertained at all. We must treat all leaders accordingly.

Sadly, in recent circumstances, this seems not to be the case. Reshuffling of ministers, replacement and even termination of a minister has deep ramifications on that particular leader, especially on how he/she is perceived by the general public and specifically to his/her electorates. Each Member of Parliament in this honourable House must be accorded the respect fitting of a Members and also reflected on the people that elected that leader together with the country as a whole. I would call the biggest sin in Solomon Islands politics is to move Members of Parliament around without consulting the leader or others in the same government.

As the second in command of any government of the day, it is the utmost expectation that managing the wellbeing of leaders is paramount. This is to ensure that leaders in turn will perform and carry out their duties assigned to them accordingly. The least any second in command to face is a situation where a leader has been moved or replaced without his or her knowledge.

In addition to what I have just mentioned, a common government in this country is one of a coalition. Putting a coalition in order is a tough call. However, upholding coalition and accepting coalition policy targets is a key to successful leadership. We

must embrace the political targets of leaders within a coalition because of one very reason that this is what the people want. We must understand that time and energy had been put together to develop various policies that difference coalition partners had on different issues. We must ensure that these positions are considered in our everyday governance of the country and therefore the whole system must be able to respond to these policies with a view that it will meet the interest of our ordinary people. This means that government priorities, as raised by most of the leaders representing the voice of our people, had time and again fallen on deaf ears. We must listen to what this country needs and not what the government wants. Continuous negligence to some policy priorities will hit brick-walls, socioeconomic and in this regard political positions. The resultant factor will be obvious. There will be lack of confidence in such leadership, both in our current case and most probably in any case in the future.

A political paradigm is a development one. Like any other political spheres, there are political choices or national decisions that we must undertake in responding to any issues that we face. The scale in which we undertake a particular action is here reflected to the scale of the issue we face and that is lack of confidence in the leadership. We did resign from a ruling government, the government led by the Prime Minister, not because of mere political rhetoric but because we do have an interest for this country so we did what we did because we care we care about the wellbeing of this nation and that this nation must never be pulled down by an assumed lack of leadership options. This nation must not remain in an iron cage, we must close the gap between the ordinary man and the government. The people of this nation must feel what the government had done and is doing. It must have meaning and it must not regulate itself in an environment of negative disposition. The gap between the leaders and leading must be align, acceptable to ourselves. We must get out of the old ways of doing things and we must move on. This means that someone needs to do it and that is why we did it. We broke loose of something that we think can change, something that can be improved for the betterment of this nation. We do not do it for our own benefit, we do it for the silent majority of this nation, for the future of this country and the people to come. Leadership must be cordial, must respect that all members of Parliament are voted into this house as a human contribution by the geo cultural settings of this nation to be able to contribute in nation building.

It is this ultimate congregation that the people of this country had embraced to ensure that leaders are put into this house to contribute and lead in whatsoever ways and means acceptable by the structure of our democracy. It is unfortunate that our system cannot mend itself once it is broken. Politically, it seems impossible, but like two equal forces, the same force that is meant to tighten the ropes can be used to slacken it. There is constitutional provisions that states that in any such event, members do not have confidence in the leadership, a motion can be tabled to

that effort. It is here by our constitutional prerogative, a choice to resign and undertake this process to effect change. Change that the leaders on this side of the house think that it must be done in order to save the country from further social political fragmentations.

The question now lies where are we heading? The people of this country must know that they way ahead is clear. We will have a new government, a government that should be able to complete government businesses and priorities within its term and a government that will ensure that the platform is right for the next government to continue deliver basic services and as far for economic development into the future. The new government must brace to bring understanding and cooperation amongst leaders on all national issues. The system must be able to provide a bipartisan platform where necessary and be able to lead strategically on matters that the country see important. This house is filled with leaders, we must put together all out capabilities and address this country and its needs accordingly. We must progress and do what is necessary to ensure that the future generations of this nation will stand tall and enjoy an economy, a democracy, a life that is fair and transparent, a nation with open opportunities.

We must have bigger dreams and we must pull ourselves out from poverty. Poverty of ideas, poverty of happiness, and this can only be done with a clear leadership and interest vested in the development of our people and the community which we live in.

The change that we undertake today should now rest the ideals of the singular form of leadership to one of a community oriented leadership. One that we can do things the way we think is fitting for our people. We must engage all people within the country, this can be part of our nation building. We must realise our potentials now, we must do what is right and I believe a change in leadership should put our position in clear to achieving national development and a better leadership for our people.

Before I conclude, I would like to share my political ambitions into the next House. As a new government we will lead this country forward then we will reach another political career soon, the National General Elections and this is when our people will be able to exercise their democratic rights to elect leaders for the next House. This country must rise up and take part in that process. Our people must be at the fore front of leadership in that regard listening out for sound policies and understand how it is going to impact your everyday life. Understanding the realities and seeing how it is going to be implemented within our life time or the next, the next government hereby is for the people of the nation. This nation should firstly stabilise general matters and complete outstanding national interest and be overall be considerate to its people and the challenges we face daily in our lives.

God bless Solomon Islands from shore to shore. With these sentiments, I beg to support the motion.

**Hon. MILNER TOZAKA:** Thank you for giving me the opportunity to contribute very briefly to this motion. In doing so, I also would like to thank my colleague the Leader of the Independent and also the Member of Parliament for North East Guadalcanal who has spoken. I have listened to the mover of the motion and the motion is a bit light and shallow begging justifications to justify the movement of that motion against the Prime Minister which according to him is no longer deemed fit to hold this position.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the Prime Minister, the son of East Choiseul for his leadership. This would be his fourth term of being prime minister of this national, and I think he has done very well. He is an experienced person in our country and we have given the opportunity to him, past Members of Parliament, past leaders and us current members by giving him the opportunity for him to be our prime minister. And I think he has led us very well.

Our country just came out of the problems that we have faced for 14 years. Except that we try to work with the regional of Solomon Islands that you will be trying to go back to stability, security and to go back to normalcy that is what we have been doing. Most of the things that we start to talk about inside here about matters of administration, matters of issues of policies that we do not do on this side, we were not free at the point of time because we were in this witness mission that help. Another institution or another body that came to our country to help us to come to where we are at the moment.

The mandate was completed in June and now the country comes back to us, and we start to own this country back. And June is not long time ago, and this is the time for us that I would have thought for some of us and including yourself that we have worked very hard collectively. We have worked very hard to bring our country to where we are in the best interest of our people, in the best interest of our nations Solomon Islands. Is this what our people in our nation expect us to do? We have eighty plus languages in our country. We need to understand each other and look at the things you have pointed out. They are very important issues, but how when we come to avenues that these issues should be discussed and be debated in the manner that you have. You have accolated very well and the leader of opposition speaks very loud for the first time and I was very impressed with what he says. I wish he could have been saying that all the time, now what I am saying to here is that now is the time for us.

This is the time for you and for me to express our concerns for the things that you think this side of the house should have done it. I am not in the position or speaking directly with the prime minister, but that is another thing about us. That when we

have problems that you are mentioning on the other side of the house; how will our dialogue; you be exhausting these things when you talk another leader. This is the way that we want to do it, can we agree and the mover of the motion said; I have spoken with the prime minister, I have remind him and advise him on some of the issues that I am not bringing up as the basis of my motion, and I agree with you. I am not satisfied that we have really have do it the way that leaders should have done. Some of us stayed here and we have not moved and one of them is myself. I am the wing leader of Alliance Party, we have a very big coalition that formed the DCCG. And this coalition is for the first time in this country to run a government under this legislation. And I do not expect any one of us to be perfect in implementing this Integrity Bill. It is very, very new to us. We need to settle down, understand and look at some of the things that are happening and speaking here as three quarter of my people is on the other side of the house.

I have heard also from the other side of a very important line of communication or a point of communication and that is consultation. Now what I am speaking here is I am trying to speak in a way that it must be balance and that we can maintain the harmonies or relationship that we have between our governments so that we can move this government forward because we have only 10 months to go. But I cannot do that because half of mine is on the other side. This is what this integrity bill is presenting. It present this awkwardness and what do we do is we try to understand each other. However what this has brought to us is you have the number now and we did not have. In other words we are crying over spill milk.

Something you should have done or I should have done to correct that issues or to correct those things that you mention. It should be in a way that you will agree on it, I agree, joint agree or collectively agree with it. That is already done and in other words you go ahead and you are free to do it. But that does not mean that it is the end of the story or our government. We must assure our people who are sitting down here and listening to us and they are saying what is going to happen to our country. It is a beautiful country and you can listen to some of the developments that are happening in all sectors of development that our government is trying to do with your support. That growing on very well indeed and you can feel this nation is moving forward now with our people participating. They want assurance from us of this government for our sake of the day. How are we going get it and what is going to happen for now. In other words can we stop this hoping when I am not happy I went out to the other side or I went out like this. I do not see as a leader and member of parliament for North vella that is the answer to how we can address this issues.

It is because some of us are public officers, the mover of the motion is a Permanent Secretary, Prime Minister is a Permanent Secretary, I was Permanent Secretary and most of us are Permanent Secretary. We are very well knowing about the system of government on how it works. It is a ministerial system of government is based on

everything you have said is how the system is been going. But our difficulty is that we can come together and talk about this things openly. However when we come to this house because it is guided, provided by and control by the regulations we are able to speak like this. When we our selves we cannot and that is one of the disadvantage of our system at the moment.

What the leader of opposition is trying to justify that we have 10 months to go. He is struggling to justify to us that he has time do that. In any decision or hard decision that you want to make. There are three determination or three things that you need to take into consideration.

one is your position, finance and time. Now look at this motion that you are moving, do we have the finance? Well, you have heard the report that has been provided by my brother who is the minister for finance. We are struggling in terms of the financial side. We have the resources but we do not have it right now to be able to meet the things that we need.

Now I do not think he was able to, as the Minister for Civil Aviation said, do not ask him the answer as to why finance is not doing well. The Member for Aoke/Langalanga was saying the same thing this week that what is happening now is the mismanagement of funds. That is true! But is the Government answerable for that? No! The Prime Minister will not be able to know, but the former Finance Minister on the other side would be able to give you the answer at the moment.

When you say do we have the finance at this moment? That is a question. Another question is do we have the position to move the motion? Yes! The Leader of Opposition and the Leader of Independent have the position under the Constitution to move the motion. That is ticked. But there is another important question and that is, do we have the time? The Christmas fever is already here. When you go into a government machinery when we finish this time, go to that machinery and it is going to grab you straightaway. It will grab you and start to tell you this and that and all of the things the Government wants to do, but the big issue is money.

In terms of settlement according to my experience, it will take a new Government 6 to 9 months to settle down to implement your policies. My question to all of us is how can we save this situation? Is it just because you do not want the Member for East Choiseul? And you said, let us do it in the best interest of our people and our country. Is it in the best interest of our country? I do not want it when I come to see you and asked, can I enter into this House, but there is no money or there is shortage in the cash flow. This is going to happen! There will be shortage in the cash flow until next year. We do not have the means to do it. The timing is wrong for us to do it. This is why Iam saying to you that when we do this thing, it is okay, it is our right under the Constitution to be able to do these things. But it is very important that we must always take into account that is it for the best interest for

our nation and people. If it is not in the best interest of our nation, then can we have a look at it again. How can we come again and come together to sort out these things amicably for the best interest of our people.

Most you who spoke from the Other side of the House and refer to us as brothers and sister, that is very good. We need to do that and start there and work together on this one. My contribution is that we still have time to come together in sorting out these things. When I speak, you must be judging me from the other side that what I am saying is not very strong or deeper. That is exactly what we felt when you moved that Motion today. I do not feel the deepness in it that can pull me and can get me to support the motion, for example, at the beginning of the formation of the DCC Government I was on the other side of House, but then I listened, they heard that I already grasshopper to the other side, then someone said to me "you are a man who always puts credibility and sincerity first in your leadership, if you still remain there, I am finished with you, I will never believe you. Never mind, we are not going to get this government or the government is still going to be formed, I want you to come back and stay with us here". I listened and why? I listened to what they are saying. And that is where I am now. I do not want to mention names but I listen to them – come and stay here so that we can form the government.

Now when I came here and I continue on with my work and work very hard, I do not want politics I just want to move the country, work forward and forward and then something happens again and someone said to me, 'it looks like the very advice I have given you is missing again'. It is no longer with me. That is what confuses me.

Now I am standing here with my shoulder up, I am able to speak very bravely here because I think it is not right. If things are not right, do not move just stay there, and try to reason things and we work together.

This motion Mr Speaker, I know that you have the constitutional right for allowing it, but I think there are other avenues that we can do it, and we can give and take and achieve the same objectives. Those things that you mentioned here are issues that we can address through existing legislations. It doesn't matter what we called this bill here no, it is not the bill that is yet to be legislated. The Member for East Malaita and former Deputy Prime Minister said so. He said that they moved not because of the Anti Corruption Bill here. No, they moved because it is like that and we respect that.

But these are our difficulties in communication - how do we communicate, how do we deal with these things when they arise. And some of us become scapegoats and in the end we find that we are just one people, one country, we are members of the same church and so forth. And our churches also want to see this brotherly love, the way that we do things must happen within us. It must take precedent of those

things here in the best interest of the nation, and not our personal interest. Personal interest is what causes this motion. But if you listen to the national interest, it does not matter what, you will remain where you are and you will look at the face of your voters in the constituency, you will love them and you will want to help them.

This is the time that the country is in your hands. After RAMSI has left, it is now in our hands, and we will enjoy it. I am sure you are experiencing it and we the government on this side are starting to look at each other and say – 'yes, Prime Minister, I think we have gone wrong on this one so can you sort it out'. The Prime Minister is listening to us. We have talked to him. We talked to him because last time I cannot talk because some donors are right behind me as well saying I must only say this and that because we want this mission to be successful. But now after the mission, we are able to speak to him, Honourable Prime Minister that is not the way to do it, we have to go out, and look at us we have already signed some agreements with the United Arab. Why? It is because we are starting to go out. We are starting to move the country, we are starting to make friends with other people to come to our country. Whereas in the past we were controlled and when we are controlled it is difficult. So all of us are free. I have no fear of my brothers from the other side there of what is going happen. I do not believe the Police is going to arrest anyone of us if the Bill is passed. Why? Legislations are already there. Legislation which are very, very powerful that are beyond this Integrity Bill. They can do it but our country is not a country that is looking for people to put them behind the bar. That is not the way.

We have rules, systems and procedures that addresses those things. And if we do the right things according to how the system works, nobody is going to disturb us. I believe that. We have been in the system for a very long time. I want to assure you that none of us is going to be tied up, we are free. This is our country and we are very free so let us move this country forward. We have to look at this Motion constructively in terms of how we can come together and move things forward. We have 10 more months to go, but I think we only have nine months left. I think we should not be disturbing each other but come together and talk over how we can amicably understand the issues that people are raising.

I am not denying what you have said against the Prime Minister is wrong. We can say anything we would like to say in here. I do not want to speak for the Prime Minister as he is going to speak for himself. But I am saying things generally that we need to look at things in a perspective where we can recognize each other. All of us cannot be prime ministers. We are very happy that one of our prime ministers completed a full term, which is good and congratulations to Sir Allan Kemakeza. Now we have one who almost completed a full term. Let us learn how to appreciate each other. It is very hard but we have to surrender to someone who is doing well. We have to respect and support him. Does not matter where you come from, but

we need to respect each other. We need to deviate a little bit from our culture and the way we do things in order to move our country forward.

With those few remarks, I am very happy that you gave me the opportunity and I am so thankful to contribute and I oppose the Motion.

**Hon ANDREW MANEPORA'A** (*East Are Are—Minister for Lands, Housing and Survey*) (12:11): Thank you for giving me this opportunity to also join other honorable colleagues to contribute on behalf of my people of East Are'Are to this very important Motion.

I feel that it is important for me to clarify my position and the decision I have taken on behalf of my people at this very difficult moment of political turmoil that our government is going through over the past week.

All my brothers are on the other side. I should have been with them on the other side. I still fail to see any serious offenses that the Prime Minister caused so that I lose confidence in him and join my brothers on the other side. This is what keeps me on this side. What serious offenses has the Prime Minister caused that warrants me to lose confidence in him? Up to this very day, I have not seen one and that is why I am still sitting on this side. I have heard the reasons outlined by the mover of the Motion and my good colleague the MP for Northeast Guadalcanal. The reasons outlined are administrative matters that we should deal with at the Caucus or Cabinet level. But it has led to where we are now today. So what else are we going to do but nothing else because numerical strength has gone from us and so we are ready to sink with the ship.

The reasons, and considering the fact that there is only 10 months left and this 10<sup>th</sup> Parliament will be dissolved. What else can we do? Can a miracle happen within this 10 months? Like my colleague, the honorable member of parliament for Temotu Nende always said that only Jesus can make miracles happen, but anyway, as outlined by the Leader of the Opposition, probably there are some merits in his debate, but I see the 10 months as that there will be no miracles happening in the consistencies and policies within the government and that is why we are still here, otherwise, I will be on the other side, but I am waiting with the ship to sink.

I have to confirm my support for the government because of two major reasons. One is this major reform policies; I am here today because I make the decision on behalf of my people, and the reason why I am still here is because with the two major key reform areas that the government seriously worked on implementing now and that is why I am maintaining my position here although the ship is sinking halfway. The other is land reform, and it is the key major priority policy in my country party and it forms major key reforms in this DCC government. I went back to the ministry of Lands trying to put things together so that at least the land reform somehow progress before this 10<sup>th</sup> Parliament dissolves. Although we are slow in

the implementation, but there has been progress so that next year we can achieve some things towards this land reform program.

Land reform is one thing that our people are waiting to see because the 85 percent of customary lands, now development cannot go because of unresolved issues, and that is why I am still sitting here. Another reason why I support the government is the local governance. The local governance reform is the agenda of the country party and which is incorporated inside the DCC government's key reform areas. At the moment, Cabinet decision has been made and the Bill is now in drafting form. I see the governance laws as important and it keeps me in this position because the rights that we neglected since independence that our people must give back this traditional rights so that we form local governance to be part of the government. For so long since the independence, our traditional leaders and our traditional rights have been neglected and this DCC government tried through our local governance policy for giving that right back to our people. Our traditional leaders, our church leaders, our elders, those at the rural communities, so that they can build themselves to be a part of the government decisions. Those are the two major reforms that are still keeping me here on this side. I am trying to understand why I should lose confidence on the Prime Minister and move to the other side with my brothers, but I cannot see any reason and that is why I am still sitting down on this side.

The reasons that I have mentioned as stated by the mover of the motion are basically about leadership style. Those leadership styles are things that can be dealt with because we can talk, discuss but that never happened, so we are caught up in a situation where we are in today.

The state of the economy was highlighted as well as one of the reasons for moving this motion of no confidence against the Prime Minister. On the state of the economy, yes there is cash flow problem but for your information, the Government is fully focused on its key priority areas on the new budget for 2018. The first time that a budget comes before Caucus and Cabinet to be scrutinised and to be in line with key policy priority areas. We are still finalising the budget to go inline with key policy areas of the Government but it might not happen any longer now.

About major projects in Malaita which was also stated as one of the reasons as to why some supported the motion to be moved today. For your information, for the major projects in Malaita the Government is fully committed to support and implement it. The problem is land issue and it comes back to the landowners, we are the one who puts obstacles to it and we blame the Government is not doing any thing about it. That is why land reform is very important to settle issues such as this. I will not talk long but I want to make my position clear on why I decided to remain with the Government and that my people from East Are, Are would be clear on what decisions I have taken and also the people of this nation.

That is what I would like to contribute to and I will remain here because of the two reasons and the time is short with only 10 months. The other reasons which I would like to find out is what serious offences did the Prime Minister caused that I would lose confidence in him and will stay with the Government until the final result. With those few remarks I do not support the motion.

**Mr DOUGLAS ETE** (*East Honiara*) (12:22): Thank you for giving me the time to talk on this very important motion. Really I did not come to talk about or destroy a democratic elected government but I am here to show that I have support the motion as per the letters of the Constitution.

For the past three years, my observation is that the Government is not showing any commitment and it does not manifest the attitude to advance important programs. I will dwell on that later on for the benefit of the overwhelming country.

I want to repeat the objective of the Government is an easy thing and that is to feed me, to ensure that I am being sheltered, to ensure that I and my children have access to medical health care and get an education. So far they have closed 10 schools and this got worse during the reign of DCCG. In one of the reports, it says 10 schools were closed as well as 10 clinics. That is the government's objective. Lastly to ensure that the economy is sustainable for the next thousand years.

Don't complain about the economy, as all of you are economists. The minister knows this behind your universal brain that this country is going down. I will further touch on this when we come down.

The former ministers that deflected knew behind their minds that they have no trust on the government. I am using the government here because the prime minister is the head of the government, and the power house is the cabinet. There are disagreements in Cabinet and that is why you are seeing some PAPs are here and you parliamentary wing leaders must not complain, you must blame yourself for not stopping these people and for not consulting with them for their dissatisfaction.

When someone is dissatisfied, he has grievance because a lot of issues with government, the constitution is the final there. We are now coming to the constitution today. I have been waiting for this time since I resigned from the government on November 6<sup>th</sup>, this same day. So allow me to talk today.

When we were elected in 2014 and we were sworn in as cabinet ministers at the state house in 2014, many members of cabinet, our attitude in cabinet is papers are not yet on the table but were passed already. We have not even read those papers but it was passed. I raised it in here once. Passed. Goodness me, read those papers first. There is no such thing as that. The process of cabinet is a solemn process. The process of cabinet is for consultation, to argue inside cabinet. And if you start to

argue you will be resented. I am one of those they do not want. I will come to this later on. Allow me to talk some more.

Secondly, I have seen over this spectrum of time the government diverting or deviating from its original course. I picked up the policy book and tried matching it with the action plans. There is no match at all. Go inside the helicopter and go to Kwaio to collect the gold bar left at Kwaio and spend around \$100,000 just to hire a helicopter.

The Minister for Peace you have to go there because the gold bar is in Kwaio. Go and tell them to reconcile with God. That is our kind of attitude. In Lord Howe, Isabel and Tulagi, is what the government really wants. We have spent money on this, I have papers to provide that cabinet has given money, almost a million dollars to these people for treasure hunt in our country. I thought the war was only on Guadalcanal and the Western Province. There were no Japanese that went to Malaita. The helicopter went so much so the minister almost died. We could have been killed some ministers with our weird ideas. But it is Cabinet that approved it. Cabinet approved those payments. I mean that is the attitude of the Government deviating from its original course.

Let me at this point touch on the policies. The people sitting on the bench on that other side knew it behind their minds but they refused to panic. They will not panic until today they will panic later. They refused because they knew that the government deviated so much but they refused to make consultation with the bosses of cabinet to say this thing is like this. You start doing that and you will be fired - come and see me in my office. I will go further and touch on some more things here.

Firstly, the Minister for Lands on alienated land. We are the ones who brought the law here because we have freehold titles here. Fiji has five different land tenure systems -- housing, methodist, freehold, native land - about five. For us, we are looking at improving this system because when we came in being a Kandere Party member, I told my party wing leader who has just spoken; and I applaud him for doing that. When we resigned, the government was doing other things, and it was just last month that you went there my brother. You have just been sworn in as a minister and you tried your best to put things right but it is already late. The 10 months is too much time, enough time to destroy this nation. I will come to it later.

The land tenure system is the most important question in these 39 years and we seem to deviate from that. I and my brother here; I am happy for you the Member for East Are 'Are. We spent our own pocket money to bring the fiscal, and we told the Prime Minister that we want this to happen. The Prime Minister reacted to what we did because it needs; that road is not good because it needs someone to be shocked that the road has gone bad, there are potholes all over. We are being

complacent here. We want people who are concerned and alert to lead this country. I think that is what it is.

Furthermore, the question of the involvement of our traditional leadership. The governing system of the country is the dream of the nation. Currently, we are being like, our independence constitution is being put on a silver platter and given to us in London after what is called the Lancaster House Agreement. It was given to us so we must look at it. We were asking about this in cabinet because it is part and parcel of the Kandere Party. I am a Kandere Party member but am not sitting with you on the other side, I am on this side.

The amendment to the Customs Recognition Act of 2000, the Prime Minister said yes we brought it in 2000 but we have shelved it. There has been no word about resurrecting it, and I doubt it that you are going to resurrect it. You will not be able to resurrect it in the 10 months left. Try it, if you may, but you will not resurrect it. It is just mere words that you will do it but you will not do it. Our leader is there who is currently the Minister for Finance. You will not do it. We are unable to do it.

The story from Parliament when we asked about the timetable of the federal system is they did not have an answer to it. The first report already came out in 2005, and this is the fifth report. So do not come to Parliament and say, yes, the policy is there when we did not even have a policy for it. We deviated and we must honestly say yes to it.

The economic growth center issue. When the Government came into power we looked into it, but last year and this year there has been no budget allocation for it. If I can recall, only three constituencies have been extended the benefit of solar and funds. But in actual fact, there is no allocation there.

I am not even sure if the constituency development center is funded. I think it was only \$100,000. The policy itself is a wrong one. I want to appeal to the new Government which will be formed that the right policy is township building. Township buildings in places such as Shortlands and Lata. Those are the two things we should be talking about in order to improve the economy, and that government funds really drop in those communities down there. The Manuopu clinic in the Reef Islands has no medicine and the building is deteriorating, but the Government has not considered that clinic for the last three years.

The Government's policy on the health role delineation program is that all area health centers and rural health centers will be equipped, and also plans to build a new hospital in a green field; will look for a green field and build it there but it does not happen!

The essential medicine list is running short, I went to the hospital yesterday and found out that there are no medicines there, not even hand gloves are there. Mind you, if hand gloves are not available there then operations cannot be conducted. We are having a great problem in this country, and those of you on the other side there do not have to tell us because Honiara is just here and we can just ask responsible officers and they will tell us the truth.

The Honiara roads, since taking office and forming the DCC Government, after four months the Prime Minister sent me as his deputy to go to Tokyo. Upon arriving in Tokyo, every other Prime Ministers were present except I was the only Deputy Prime Minister present then. Prime Minister Abe called me to a sideline meeting to reaffirm the commitment towards this national project, which the Gordon Darcy Lilo Government did the negotiation. Lilo's Government is the one responsible for the main road down there. You did not go to Japan, I was the one who went and talked with Prime Minister Abe, I brought a Cabinet paper to them. In that Cabinet Paer, we talked about the Honiara three phase road. We also talked about a new airport and the Mataniko Bridge that is now being constructed. My question is, what has the Government done? The Government must tell me today! I want to hear it from you. All you ministers must inform us about what his/her ministry has been doing. We must all take the blame for it, and not the prime Minister alone. Some of you minister are not doing any work! The Prime Minister told me you are not doing any work. We must all take the blame for this vote of no confidence today. They told us.

I asked the Foreign Minister why they are not doing some of the things we talked about. For instance, the Morocco issue, where 20 of our engineers are supposed to go over there. I also asked the Foreign Minister in Parliament and also outside of Parliament as to why our civil and mechanical engineers did not go to Japan under that proposed offer. Why did you not follow that up? You went overseas just about every week.

*laughter*

Why did you not follow up this Melanesian arrangement with us and Papua New Guinea? We think that Papua New Guinea is none existent. We think we do not have a sister there. We do we have. They are prepared to help us but we are just hanging around.

You must tell me today that you are doing this and that in the ministries. Every one of you must have a chance to speak to this Motion. I am happy with the Member for Central Guadalcanal because he contributed to the Motion. It does not matter we accused you like this and that but you must speak today. So I applaud you, my brother, the man they want to destroy.

Tina Hydro – the story of Tina Hydro is different. The Cabinet met last week; and we got these information from those of you still sitting down over there, you are the one reporting the Prime Minister to us.

In regards to the Tina Hydro, the Guadalcanal people have setup an idea here for the Guadalcanal people to setup a company where they can be shareholders of this share structure arrangement with ICSI. About \$185million that was given, the Solomon Islands Government took it out from the IMF and the World Bank with ADB - \$35million grant, \$150million loan, and when we loan like that, we have reached the ceiling at the Central Bank for a loan so we cannot go on loaning anymore, both domestic and foreign loans, soft loan but it us that makes this money. Getup, there are no landowners included. The Korean Water does not even bring in one single cents; you guys must prove to us that it is bringing money into the country. It will hold 51 percent of it and then a private crony will hold another 49 percent. Only those two will hold shares in Tina Hydro.

*A member interjecting:* Who is the crony?

Aye, every one of you knows this very well so I will not tell you.

The Minister for Finance and the Minister for Mines know about this. Where is my uncle?

Mr Speaker, these things are not petty things. We have to go back to the drawing table and rewrite it, we have to review it. We cannot be doing that. Is that what you called nothing. I am surprised at those of you who said you cannot see anything wrong.

Those of you sitting inside Cabinet were saying when the Tina project comes in that you do not want any presentation but just do it. That is your attitude in Cabinet. "I do not want to see it, do not present it, let us just do it". Goodness me, let us allow the technical people to come and explain to us because we are not technical people. You must know that that is the attitude of Cabinet.

On the Skyline issue, on the 7<sup>th</sup> July 2015 at Lawson Tama, the Prime Minister stood up and said 5,000 houses are going to be built. On a log of claims, the Union, the government officials came up with good ideas, good plans. It is also inside the book called the policy that Skyline is going to build 5,000 houses. The Honourable Prime Minister must tell us what has happened to that project. We were announcing 5,000 houses, and I was sitting down there because I was his deputy at that time. There are no 5,000 houses instead he turned around and sacked everyone for saying that they do not know how to deal with the PPP (private partnership) arrangement with the government.

When I deputized the Prime Minister when he travelled overseas with his delegation, I called a meeting with them to look into what happened with the

Skyline group. The officials just brought a paper and said they did not get directions from the top to do it. They did not even have any written plans to do it. They said that someone has to direct them. I said that it should not be like that because it is already in the policy. They said that they were not given the directions and there was no funding for the project. This is a failed project.

The project under NAZZAR for Kilu'ufi Hospital was also announced on 7<sup>th</sup> July 2015 to the people of Malaita. On top of that, the Prime Minister himself went on a patrol boat to Auki and pounded his fist on the table. The people who went with him informed me, including the former Deputy Prime Minister. The promises those people were making saying they will do this and that, they will do this for the Malaitans. They compared it with former prime ministers and said that former prime ministers never did that. That is not the attitude of the honourable Member for South New Georgia/Tetepare. What he said is that it is the people of Malaita that built Gizo, Kirakira and other provincial centers so why can we not work together in a consultative process to build the hospital in Malaita Province. Where is the hospital now? The psychiatric unit at Kilu'ufi has closed down. Last time there was no food for the patients. My what! There is no such thing as running a government like that. We are not running a business. The government is not a business. The sociology of government is different. If the government's belly is cut up, it is quite different. Its attitude of running a government is different. Do not promise things that you cannot fulfil.

The NAZZER Group of Companies wanted to build a hotel here in Honiara but they left. The former Deputy President of France talked to me and gave me his phone number but when I got back here, I resigned and did not want to give the government. They said that they wanted to build a line of hotel in Honiara. He said the French Government is going to fund that project. They emailed me but I refused because the government cannot do it. I think a new government will do it with the French Government.

With regards to the Sumitomo issue, it is a company directly linked to the Government of Japan and the Japanese Government is one of the largest funders in this country in terms of infrastructure and other things. We were sitting down in Cabinet and the ministers came crying saying they wanted the other company. Is that so? Sumitomo once established in this country, but now they are no longer here, they will create jobs in this country. They are going to build a smelting factory for limonite and saprolite. We have lost that opportunity because of bad decisions made by the government. Decisions of wanting to keep the number and so we listened to those people. I was there in Cabinet at that time.

I am happy that the Minister for Finance has reaffirmed the state of the economy, and he also stated that the economy is not very healthy. We currently have a deficit of \$305million and which I believe will reach \$700million in the third-quarter. Last

year it was a little bit over \$600million in both trade balance deficit and the budget deficit. Do you still think it is not wrong? Who said it is not wrong? We must be out of our minds. The inflation rate was cut at 3.5 but now it is going up to 7. They said it will go down to 0.6 percent, which means it will sit at 6 percent. What I am saying is this economy is going down and and you are asking 10 months. You are asking 10 months for what? What is that for? The treasury is empty and so we have decided not to give you those 10 months.

I am almost done but I have a few more things to say. The interest rate now; fiscal and monetary is still very high. If you go down to the commercial banks now, although the Central Bank is independent but the government is inside the Central Bank that regulates the commercial banks. Any fiat money inside there, anything that belongs to the Central Bank, the government is the chairman of it, the Minister for Finance.

Productivity in this country is low because we have not properly arranged our economy properly. I will not waste my time here to talk about what we should be doing.

The issue of the state issuing incentives to only its friends. Agriculture and other businesses were just given to their friends. As you can see now the state machinery is being used to fund private interests and not public goods and services. There is a difference there.

It is the state that is financing the private sector and that is why no growth can happen to it. I must tell you straight. If anyone says growth will be on him/her, then I would like to hear the reasons. If you want to do an incentive with agriculture then give everything on agriculture, get a proper policy for it. If the state wants to give incentive on infrastructure, then there must be a policy to give it, and give it to everyone. But it is not like that, the Government does not operate that way.

Where are the public goods and services? Where are the public finance projects? Where are they? We are funding Bina Harbour, but I have not seen any budget for the Bina Harbor. I cannot even see any budget for Waisisi too. A seed money. If anything, it is \$100,000 for this and it is for study. Oh my goodness, there have been studies done in the last 10 years already and there are reports on the table for us to read. We are not starting anew, we are running a government.

Industrial relations law, occupational diseases. The people working for the tobacco company have been trying their best at the Labour Department but they were not able to receive any money for their illnesses. Trade Union loss; Employment Act; if you are sacked today you are sacked. If you want to appeal it will remain there for a long time before it can be heard by the Trade Disputes Panel. And then you will also lose the case.

Safety at work, Labor Act, Trade Union Act, Essential Services Act, Immigration Act. Many of the people coming here to work in our country are working here illegally. I was shocked to see in the newspaper three people playing football being deported. Goodness me!! Can you not recall all the passports of all the foreigners working here so that we can see it. What is so hard for the Government recalling them? We must be out of our heads. We only deport people playing football. I can promise you that there are a lot of illegal people working here in Honiara as well as in other places.

I am asking for the 2004 Forestry Bill to come to Parliament for amendment. The Government does not have any plan to deviate the sector to finance its cash flow and our revenue capture in the country. Not at all. Because logging has already gone down. Logging is not an illegal business, but what else would you do? What else would you show the country that this is what we are going to do, these are the programs that we will do once logging is gone. I am asking you.

You have never said it on air or on the newspaper. I want you to say it here on the floor of Parliament. Logging has already gone out. More than 2 million cubic meters are shipped out per annum. We have not decided to put a moratorium on it. Goodness me, once when we were, you have talked about it but you have not done it.

We complained about not having any revenue; where is the Minister for Mines - when is he going to bring the Mining Bill to Parliament? If you look at the Act, it is there as a schedule. They said it is mineral that has not been expounded, even taxing it, and that is why you are blamed you for it Prime Minister for texting. There were claims you were texting that there will be zero tax. I have seen the text, it is here with me now. There is nothing wrong with it. It would be good if the Prime Minister instructs the Minister for Mines as that is the formality of it, so that the Prime Minister is not seen as bad. You could have said, 'Minister, I want you to write a letter to such and such a company telling them we have appreciated their work and investment in this country'. Let them put more money into this country. Instead all the money goes out and we do not know whether those money are going to come back or not.

The way to do it is there, but we have not done it. I know that you know about this. I know that the Prime Minister knows what to do, but he did not do it. I asked the Attorney General when I was the Deputy Prime Minister as to why we applaud both APID and Bintang because Cabinet rejected both of them. It is Bintan with an 'n' and not TP Bintang Borneo. Bintan is a company that has never done any prospecting here but it was given a license.

Yes, the former Minister for Mines brought a paper to Cabinet but it was rejected. I know these two were suspended and whether we have the powers. I think we do

not have the powers to do it because under the Act only the board has the powers. I asked the Attorney General and he said to me that he was only in office for a few days and so he was not aware of the problem. He was correct in his reply because he has only been there in office for a few days and I asked that question to him. But the attitude of a government.

The former Minister for Finance did it correctly because it was not in the Act and the Prime Minister knew bauxite was not in the Act. He could have in these three years brought a bill to Parliament. But he did not do that. Are we going to give them another 10 months for them to do it? If that is so, we are going to give you another 10 months to do it.

Another thing is we promised to establish a wage council. It is in the plan of action of the government; strategy. I do not know why it is called a strategy because strategy is just one strategy. I want them to call it a plan of action; that is what we are going to do and table it down in the matrix to achieve that. If the strategy does not work, then we have to find another way. And if that way does not work then we have to find another way and so forth. But inside the strategy they said we will create a wage council and wage council is very important for the working people of this country. Why it is important is because it has always been in the log of claims of unions here. And we must give ears to the unions here because they are part and parcel of a society. Wage is a social issue.

Wage in this country is pitched on negotiations and negotiations alone. If SINTA is aggressive in its negotiations then that is what they will get, and the same with SIPEU; no more no less. But the sad part of it is the Prime Minister and the government knew that this arrangement is a rigid arrangement. That is why the government only have what is called - SOS (Scheme of Service). The scheme of service is meant for a temporary thing when it is done in the 1980s. Governments after governments have been using that one and leave it there and have not done anything with it.

I must tell you that wage in this country is bad, it is not a living wage. Wage in this country must be pitched at a point where 20% of it can be used for daily sustenance and the another 20% for savings. That is not so now. The day you get a wage the next day before pay day, I bet you, it would have been gone. You even do not know where it goes to. You will only pay for one (1) bag of rice, 1 carton noodle just to keep at home and that is it. We have a very big problem.

The legal minimum wage in this country of \$4—I made a submission to it when I was the CEO of the National Referral Hospital, at the same time I was the President of the Solomon Islands Public Employers Union (SIPEU) where we pitched it at the bread basket determined by the ILO, but we pitched it at 2000 prices. This is now 2017, and is the government still sleeping?

This is a very sad episode. This shows a government not being considerate about its people. It promised they would bring it in July this year, but nothing happens in July. I think it will come in July 2019. These are the real issues, and I am touching them because of the idea of bad wage in this country.

Our debt in this country has risen to around \$1.5 billion for both local, inshore and offshore, both multilateral loans and commercial loans, both local and overseas of around .1. I have done calculations on it. The former Minister for Finance did it rightly by amortizing payments during that time under the Honiara Club Arrangement. But now because of no cash flow in this country because you did not bring in the Mining Act in order for us to get some money from the bauxite. Bauxite is going out of the country and they are not only getting bauxite but they are also getting phosphate at the same time. One expert white man told me that Rennell and Bellona is 10 times richer than Nauru.

The Minister for Health, this is your area, so you can continue sitting there and do not worry. The Minister for Finance, you must listen to what I am saying in case you are part of any governments in the future that I want this bill to come so that we can make amendments to it so that we put bauxite, phosphate as resources of the country; non renewable ones. Once they are gone it is finished. I want to promise you that 20 years from today; and the people of Rennell/ Bellona are listening to me I am talking today. If this country continues at the same rate, in 20 years time all of us will be poor. Not only this country but the people who should be extended the benefits of royalty are only getting 1% or 1.5%.

The bench on the other side still holds, in my view, an innocent plea that this economy is good. Who told you that? You must be dreaming. This country is going down. And all of us must take equal blame for the current state of the economy. Not only you, but those of us on this side must also take the blame. My plea is for any new government to go forward in the right direction.

In regards to the Anti Corruption Bill and the Whistle Blowers Bill, I am one person who supports those bills with a grain of salt. I support it with a big "IF". I support it if the government fixes the economy properly, sorts out the wage of the working people, sorts out forestry, fisheries, sorts out all extractive industries before it brings the strengthening institutions inside here.

I used to be working in the government and when I was working in the government, there were no other people that were my bosses except the Permanent Secretary is my boss. I was on super scale 2 before I came out into politics. I went around all the government ministries, except the Ministry of Education. If we are not careful so any new government must take into consideration what I am saying today. We must properly fix the systems, fix the economy, and then bring in the Bill to Parliament. I am very happy about this Bill. I want this Bill.

Who said that outboard motors used by the Agriculture chief field officers in Gizo are kept in Gizo. No, those boats with the OBMs are in the homes in their villages. The same occurs everywhere. The whole time, they are not working, they are not doing their job because they say that the bosses up there are not working so why worry, they do likewise. That is their thinking. I want us to fix the economy, I want to see the Forestry Bill and the Mines Bill to come before Parliament, sort out the participation of chiefs within the government. We can do it with this current government; we can do it. Who says it is difficult? It is not difficult.

Our provincial government system is adopted from Quebec, the papers about this are available for us to read. In the Quebec system, the indigenous people are in the Government system. When that system was brought here, we excluded the indigenous people. The Customs Recognition Bill must come to Parliament. We only talked about it but it never came to Parliament.

There must be an amendment to the Public Finance and Management Act and its regulations done. We are only good at talking about it for the past three years but nothing has been done. It was supposed to be a bipartisan arrangement. And then bring in that Bill to Parliament and I will fully support. If not, a lot of people will end up in jail; starting from low wage earners, the cleaners down there because their wages is very low and so he/she has to steal. We must come out, let us not sit in a concon. Let us come out and reason it out properly. Consequently, the Rove prison will increase to triple size, beginning with us inside here. Two Members of Parliament will be jailed and then we will come here and ask to remove the RCDF from us. Put it to a better system and we only give the authorization. What is hard about it.

Before concluding, my relationship with the Prime Minister is a good one based on a working relationship. He was my Prime Minister and I was his Deputy. I went overseas on two occasions when the Prime Minister could not attend. One was at the Palm 7 meeting in Tokyo and then to New Delhi- India. I headed the delegation from the Forum Economic meeting in Bangkok. I was in Australia and I received a phone call telling me to return quickly because the Prime Minister has already written a letter for your sacking. Goodness me, sack for what? I thought to myself the reasons for the sacking. They wanted to sack me on four occasions; the letters have been written already. I returned here and gave one letter to Prime Minister Peter O'Neil regarding the sale of the former Westpac Bank whereby they were just ready to sign, but then the Prime Minister said otherwise and so Prime Minister O'Neil was not quite happy with this country and with our arrangements on the sale of the former Westpac to BSP.

Prime Minister Peter O'Neil said to me that after our talks he will reactivate 20million Kina under the Gordon Darcy led government arrangement with Papua New Guinea in which the Honourable Member for Small Malaita went and signed

that framework and plus 200 of our students going to school in Papua New Guinea will be funded by the Papua New Guinea Government. However, this was never done by the Foreign Minister until today.

So I came back and I was summoned with the Member for West Honiara inside the Prime Minister's room. I am taking time to say these things because I have been waiting to say them in the last two years now. I resigned on the 6<sup>th</sup> November as of today as well, I tendered my resignation from the government.

Mr Prime Minister, I am telling true things in here because we are both Christians. No one must tell lies in here.

**Hon Manasseh Sogavare** (*interjecting*): You are speaking lies, my friend.

Do not lie, you are the one who told me. But one person from another denomination told me. I was sobbing at that time because I did not know what had happened. Tears trickled down my eyes because I was thinking that I was doing good things for the government so why would they want to sack me. I did not have any slightest clue as to what had happened. He said to me; and you must not lie, just listen to me. One person told me, and that person I ultimately shook hands with him last month, I shook hands with that person. I shook hands with him and gave him \$200.00 because I uttered a somewhat profane language at that time because I was not quite happy. When I resigned I was not so happy so I used cursed language at him. That man said; and my witness is sitting right in front here, the Member for West Honiara, only you and I are here. He said to me, one very respected person from another church informed him that you are the one who will break up the government. You are the one doing this and that. And so I said to myself, 'Prime Minister what has happened, I know nothing about this.

The Prime Minister must tell the truth because when I checked the whole cabinet they all said no. It is like something that drops down from the blue sky but he pounded the table, Mr Speaker, and said, when that person arrives; everyone of you witnessed this, the Member for Lau/Mbaelelea and everyone in Cabinet at that time, he said when he comes I will sack him. You pounded the table. 'Aye, aye for what'. Everyone of us are here. Do not tell lies.

It is like a woman being paranoid at her husband who went to work thinking he is doing things she is imagining in her head.

**Mr Speaker:** Point of Order: Order, Order, please before I forget you need to withdraw the word lie that you are using here. And please respect our rules of debate in Parliament. Thank you.

**Mr Douglas Ete:** Mr Speaker, I cannot think of any other word to use instead of lies but since you have made that ruling, I will just apologize to the Prime Minister and apologize to you as well Mr Speaker. I withdraw that word.

I was sitting down at the Parliament building on Sunday and one female officer of the Prime Minister's Office called me saying, 'honorable Ete', and I said, 'yes!', 'tomorrow morning you are summoned, but let me tell you one thing. Your letter of termination from the post of Deputy Prime Minister is here'. This is my opinion but the people the Prime Minister has been getting advice from are those who are praying to dead angels. If a Prime Minister has such an attitude towards his ministers, the result of it is what you are seeing today; the number is on this side. Any minister seen talking to anyone on the opposition side would be summoned by the Prime Minister. A lot of us on this side have been summoned by the Prime Minister many times. They will testify to this. I am not telling lies and I do want to tell lies. This is holy ground and we must not tell lies inside here. This is your chamber, Mr Speaker.

Finally, let me use the words of Plato here - 'The punishment of the wise who refuse to participate in government'- my version in a new government 'is to be ruled and governed by idiots'. I am not saying we are idiots here or those on the other side are idiots but this country is ailing. So give them another 10 months. I feel that people of Solomon Islands are tired of travelling on roads that are deteriorating. Had it not been for Gordon Darcy Lilo, a former Prime Minister, I can tell you that nothing will happen. The people of this country, my people of East Honiara Constituency and myself have no confidence in the current Prime Minister and I support this Motion.

**Hon. CHRIS LAORE** (*Shortlands—Minister for Forestry and Research*) (13:23): Thank you Mr Speaker. I am not quite happy because you seem to ignore me every time I wanted to speak. I am one of the resigned ministers and not the Member for Aoke/Langalanga.

**Mr MATTHEW WALE:** Point of Order! I am feeling hungry and it is 1.30pm now. Are we going to go for lunch?

**The SPEAKER:** May be after this we can go for lunch.

**Hon. CHRIS LAORE** (*Shortlands—Minister for Forestry and Research*) (01:24): Thank you for this opportunity to clarify to the public and also to my people on why I resigned as the Minister of Forestry. It is like this, I have two issues that affected me as the member for Sortland Islands.

Border issue, arms have been traded across the border whether you like it or not it is there. Minister for Police, what have you been doing? I came in 2011 during the elections and my people have asked me to come. I came in and the same time I was

sacked as a back bencher, but then I came in as a minister when Gordon Darcy Lilo was Prime Minister, he placed me as the minister for police. Everyone was scared to bring in the Police Bill because of the fear of rearmament and I brought it in because I am neutral and I do not have any issue with anyone, I am friends to all and it has been passed on the floor of Parliament for the first time as the Minister for Police. We have now regulated it now and our police are rearmed, but nothing with the issue of our borders and strengthening it to protect my people and everybody as a whole nation. It has been ignored, when problems arise we send response there. When I was a minister, I asked the coordinator for RAMSI why they do not look after the border and they went for a little period of time and then they withdrew and eventually nothing happened. They said that they are not here to address border issues, they are only here to address the issue of law and order in Honiara only, and that is good, but are there any other plans for addressing our borders? Not at this stage. I have asked the commissioner for Police, the new one, how can we address the border issues and he said that it is difficult because we do not have resources and that the other side they do not have any laws. I said that that is not true, if you are the government of this side and you address the border issues, not a single one on the other side will come through. You protect our border, our people, they are human beings and they are scared of guns and I hope that this government that rearm our police will place security there. Shortlands never came up as a developed constituency, any business that comes will be raided the next day.

Last Christmas, a business man was struggling to make ends meet and they came and stole his cartons of beer. He has his license but because nobody cares about the border. I always spoke about the border issues on Parliament, not only on the government side but in Cabinet too please come and do something. The Prime Minister told me recently, but it is too late. A third world war might in through Shortlands just like the second world war. Anyway, my concern is with the Border issues.

My second issue is health issue. There is an open border there and not at Temotu. On tong Java is an open border, HIV/Aids at Bougainville is high, can anyone tell me the number of HIV/Aids carriers are here now? We do not know whether they come through the border or not. We just heard from the labs that a person is HIV positive but we do not know how and where they came through. It is an open border down there which we never address. To be honest, we only want to address individual needs of Cabinet, so we have people who would fight that they get things first because they have started the Government. But Honourable Prime Minister for some who went back to you now, they were the ones who were here wanting to throw you down. We went and saved your government then you pulled them back and listen to them and it affected us who were trying to protect and finish your term. I am talking from my heart and this is my turn so you can answer me later

on. I am seeing some of them there who are so vocal here but I do not want to say their name, they know who they are.

But those are the two main issues that I always would like to address for the good of my people and the nation. You never know, RAMSI has left us already and for us business is not thriving because border crossing is every day and weekends. Since Independence then we had Bougainville Crises then we had Ethnic Tension and now but still nothing was done. It is a national issue, the border is also for you Honourable Prime Minister because from where you are but we failed to address it. That was my concern and that is why I do want to sit there because my people will say you are there but you never address our issue. That is the reason why I decided to move with those who moved because I see that I have no say in this policy. I came in when I was in the Opposition and there was no policy that addressed any national projects of Shortlands. When I came and served the Government they gave me grant to get a ship and I am still struggling yet to get it and that is also. Also the oil palm project in Shortlands and also Waisisi was not addressed, the nursery already has fruits but that is our policy. It is my time to talk so you all listen and then you will answer me.

As the Minister of Forestry, I was thinking that I will be able to straight everything but yet we have been controlled by somebody else. I will not give names but when I want to do my work they told me you will be sacked so you need to slow down. So I was there to only sit down and watch while somebody else is telling me to do something. I told the Governor General during my briefing about who controls the office, his advised to me was you as a Minister under the Act the power is yours. Anybody can consult with you but never address you to do what they want. That is what I see as Minister for Forestry and so I passed the moratorium which the Government has put and I enforced it where non member logging companies are not allowed to export except for those who are members. That is a moratorium. If you are a non member, you are not allowed. And that is good because it controls the number of investors, but the Act itself does not say if you are a member you can export, the Forestry Utilisation Act did not say that.

The other thing is I brough a paper to tighten up square logs. Do you know what a square log is? Just trim out its bark and it becomes a square and it is timber. The Act itself does not provide for that. We passed that in Cabinet last year. The tubi was cut during the agro forestry time were lying all over the place. It was passed in cabinet by a majority so that it assists resource owners to get their money out of those logs, but it has not been gazetted. And I don't know why it does not gazette? Eight percent of logs that was remained to support our downstream processing centers in Honiara but it did not happened. I decide to leave the ministry and come to this side because I do not feel as if I am part of the government. When they terminated the minister of mines they also say that I would be next, that is why I decide to come out to start new. When I was sitting down here I draw a picture of a

squid and I do not know how that picture came about. I shows that I move slow but I reverse back fast, that is how the squid works. So that is how I feel we go slow but we reverse back fast, that is how I see as a member. I cannot put anything right here in this ministry because I feel that somebody has control it.

We must know that investors abide by our laws, its not them to control our law and tell us what to do. They abide by our laws, if you do something you suffer the consequences, you have to pay the penalties. There is no penalties in logging, the act will come but when. If I remain in forestry next year it should come in the first sitting. I thank the government because consultation have already been done, I thank the government for supporting through the supplementary to continue with the consultation with the forestry act. Next we should do is for consultation to do the review; hopefully if any government comes in please bring in to the floor of parliament so that we tighten the lope holes that were made for these to go through.

In regards to what the Member for East Honiara said on the volumes of logs to millions. Not so, annually it is almost half a million of discrepancies, 500,000 cubic meters always a discrepancy from data from the forestry officer and data from Customs. That is the truth. It is not happening just now but way before I went in there. Now the logs have gone down and issues will be coming up and every body is fighting but we have to put things right so that we do not find resources like we are crying for it. I am working for 21 years at the National Referral Hospital. At that time everything is running smooth even though the government does not have a large amount of money. But we have doctors and expatriates who have come and helped out. At this time the budget have going up but the hospital is deteriorate and even myself I will not want to sleep in the hospital. As I have said, I am not blaming the Prime Minister for doing that is wrong. It is us who are in there are fighting for it ourselves then we start talking about removing that person because he did not pay me or change him. But then what happened, the changes happen but nothing happens.

The Ports Authority reform. The honorable colleague for North Malaita who remove Mr. Yow is removed but the reform is still going on. They implement it but nobody talks about it. It works for this colonial reform that he is doing and this is what the government is been using at the moment in Ports Authority. I see it and I feel that if I am sitting I am just sitting for somebody else interest. So I better go out before they make my name bad to my people of Shortlands and I have to resign and walk across.

Thank you very much for contributing very briefly but to the point.

*Sitting suspended for lunch at 1.41pm*

Sitting resumed at 3:005pm

**The SPEAKER:** I will allow one member from the Government side to speak and then I will allow the Prime Minister to respond.

**Hon. MANASSEH SOGAVARE** (*East Choiseul—Prime Minister*) (03:06): With due respect, My Speaker, if you can allow some more ministers to speak on the Motion.

**The SPEAKER:** Leave is granted.

**Hon. STANLEY SOFU** (*East Kwaio—Minister for Infrastructure Development*) (03:06): Thank you for recognizing the Member of Parliament for East Kwaio and maybe I will be the former or the outgoing Minister for Infrastructure development.

I wish to join other colleagues who have already spoken on this very important Motion, the Motion of No Confidence, moved by the Leader of Independent and the Member of Parliament for North East Guadalcanal, that reads that the National Parliament of Solomon Islands resolves it has no confidence in the Prime Minister".

I will begin by saying that in 2007, we have 4 this side and 3 on the other side of the House. We moved the Motion at that time and it was very successful. The same allegation about the Leadership style of the current Prime Minister, but for this current Motion, the 23 of us have the confidence in the Prime Minister. What happen is that we have experienced and see the Leadership style which was entertained in 2017 is good and that is why we support him until this very day. I believe the Prime Minister is a changed person. If that kind of attitude remains with the Prime Minister I do not think the 23 of us will remain with him. We must understand that all of us are elected Members being given the mandate by our people.

I was listening to what are the grounds or the reasons the Prime Minister as head of the Government and we the Ministers should bring down the government for. I did not hear Mr Speaker, the Leader of Independent and Member of Parliament for North East Guadalcanal and the Mover of the Motion have stated the same reasons in late 2017 so it does not convinced me.

Most of the things echoed during the presentation of this Motion are things that can easily be sorted out. Mr Speaker, I heard during the presentation of the Leader of Independent that there were three former Prime Minister's there and well experienced and highly qualified. So why they did not addressing the situations Mr Speaker. My second point, why during that time they did not resign.

Mr Speaker Sir, the DCC government were compromised of three political parties. We have out executive, the leaders of the parties. If we did not happy with other things, there are ways that we can address through those political parties and through the executives. And I believe Mr Speaker, my good brothers who have resigned they know this and they were all senior Ministers of the Cabinet and even the backbenchers as well. Some of them were been the third terms in Parliament

that we are together. There is an avenue that we need to address the things that we are not happy with.

Whatever the dissatisfaction where the Political Appointees Mr Speaker, they were the officers. It is not because he is the relative of the Prime Minister so we have to be afraid of him, no. If we are not happy of what he is doing and the implementation of government's policy if it is not going along with our minds, we are the ministers we have upper hands. There are proper ways and avenues to address this one.

Mr Speaker, I did not feel like speaking so I did not prepare my debate speech but because my big brother, the Member for East Honiara said that he wants all of us ministers to speak, and so I as a chief must contribute to this motion. I want to air the voice of the people of East Kwaio to this very important motion and to state very clearly where is my position and so forth. You have seen me sitting this side of the House that I am this side of the House. I made the commitment and my people have seen me already.

My position is decided already and I fully support this government and the Prime Minister.

Mr Speaker, in terms of consultation where other colleagues on this side of the House that they were already informed the Parliament. I am surprised Mr Speaker that after every Caucus and Cabinet, the former Minister of Finance and the former Minister of Development Planning they are ones that talked with the Prime Minister. We should not hide it anymore that when we finished in Cabinet we just went straight to our vehicles then we left but they are the ones that going inside the office of the Prime Minister. I do not know what they are talking about but maybe consultations were in there they talked with the Prime Minister because they were the senior ministers and Assistant Leader of Political Party UDP, so we trust them. Maybe they consulted, they gave their opinions or their thinking about their level of implementation of projects because he is the Minister for Planning. We thought those things are well conducted. It was not until today when the Motion was presented, before we heard my good brother and my former Prime Minister outlined one of the reasons as lack of consultation.

I think the Motion should be moved by one of the Ministers that left the government. Anyway, the Leader of the Independent Group to move the Motion and he did based on the information rendered to him. My point is that there were consultations made between the Prime Minister and our senior officials.

I agree with my good brother, the Leader of the Opposition. I am a Malaitan and a leader in Malaita. I am happy to hear about the projects for Malaita because we have the highest population. We want the national projects on Malaita to eventuate so that our people can go back and work on Malaita. I think reasons seen to be obstacles were echoed by the Minister of Lands and they are land issues and relating to the

identified for development. We cannot just throw the question of why the projects on Malaita have not been implemented. We need to know the obstacles.

The second is clear. On Monday 23<sup>rd</sup>, when Parliament was resumed and then adjourned, the newly appointed Minister of Finance gave the state of the economy of this country. Our economy is not healthy. We can change the government today to lead for the next twelve months but I do not think a miracle can happen. No! The Minister of Finance clearly stated the state of our economy.

Those are the two reasons that seem to be obstacles, not in Malaita Province alone, but also other government programs and other provinces as well. . We cannot just say the government failed to implement its policies. You need to find out the issues causing the problems and why national projects for Malaita are not being implemented. There are a good number of Malaita MPs who joined the government. They just left yesterday. We have been with the government together. We tried our very best but the difficulty is on the two reasons I stated earlier. This is why the important projects have not been implemented and I hope any new government taking over can implement the projects within the twelve months. It is not easy. This is my third term in Parliament. To form a government and to come up with policies and programs is not easy. It will take time.

A point was raised by my good brother, the Members of Parliament and former Minister for Forestry about the border. The current Minister for Police has just been appointed recently. As a former Minister for Police, my good brother has seen me on several occasions and he even wrote to me. He tried his best. Border security is very important for our people living down there. I see it as a priority. But when my good brother, the member of Parliament for Shortlands has debated today, he touched on the National Security Bill. I tried to explain to my brother that that is very important, but we cannot just go and address the situation by placing police there to secure the border. We need to have an approach that there should be immigration, quarantine and customs there because these things are very important. We can address that through the National Security Bill and that is the concept of the National Security Bill that I took to Cabinet already. It has been approved, a Director was appointed and he is working on it at this time. They are starting to make consultations in our provinces and they have just finished with Malaita and will be moving on to Western province and Isabel province. This Bill will be brought before Parliament and it will certainly address the concerns and issues that we are raising here. It is true, that was a very good concern from my brother the member of parliament for Shortlands and he has aired for his people. It will certainly come when the National Security Bill come into effect. They are working on it and awareness's and they are trying to work on it through out our provinces and our rural settings.

In 2017, I resigned from the government and we have been successful. The current Prime Minister who is sitting in front of me is going down. When I resigned, I felt very sad because of the fact that we are causing instability that will make aid donors and investors lose trust in the government. I believe that the presentation made by the mover this morning that the Prime Minister will respond to, but for myself, I have failed to get the reasons why the government is going down. Maybe there are other reasons, but it is not stated out in the clear. I believe that if the Prime Minister fail to consult in doing things, I do not think there will be people still with him. One of the points raised by one of the contributors was that, the policies are not good enough. I am surprised by that, how is it that the policies are not good enough? For your information, our two important function policies are what my colleague, the Minister for Lands and member of parliament for East Are Are has mentioned today: Land Reform and Traditional Governance. They are very important because of the fact that our chiefs and the people in the village who are taking up important responsibilities for our people are not recognized and I support this policy. I feel that the reasons behind this motion as echoed through the presentation of the Leader of the Independent Group, like my colleague, the Minister for Lands has mentioned were all administrative matters and can be addressed there.

I think in the future when any government is formed, make sure when we resign we must do so for a good reason, something to do with government policy.

We have money but we are not using it to work is why we resign. We cannot just resign when there are issues that needs to be addressed. We are leaders from the 50 constituencies of Solomon and we cannot just complain all the time. There are things that are done in the cabinet that must be stopped. Our people want to see things happening, we want to inform them on what is the obstacle and what is the difficulty. I do not support the motion but my position on the Anti-Corruption Bill is I have supported it from day one until today.

I will stop here and I do not support the motion. I now resume my seat.

**Hon. FREDA SORIACOMUA** (*Temotu Vattu—Minister for Women, Youth, Children and Family Affairs*) (3 :26): Thank you and thank Leader of Independent, The MP of North East Guadalcanal for this motion.

I would like to contribute as well to this as I am the only woman who is inside the Government in this country. I would like to comment on and put out my views on my experiences working together with male dominated leaders of our country. I would like to say this, it is now my 3<sup>rd</sup> year inside the Government and as a leader elected by my people of VATU Constituency, the main problem that I see is as leaders of this country is we are never satisfied, even when we are put in the portfolios that we should implement in and prove to our nation with our capacity. For myself I feel so sad, this is the second time that this Government has faced this.

The reason why I did not move to go to the other side is, it does not mean that I am not happy with my brothers who are on the other side of the House but because I want to see how we leaders of this country will work for our people. Our people keep on calling us corrupt leaders, we do not implement and put more development for our people in our constituencies. To me how I see it is, the leaders are never satisfied. I want to share my purpose of coming into the Government, I came in not because of power, not because I want to get what I want but because I want legacy for my people and I want to finish my term in the Government and see what the Government of the day implements throughout our whole nation.

I am really sad to see that this is the second time that our leaders who should be working together to achieve what the people of this nation want. As of today, I really believe that if more women are inside here, they will make changes to this nation but for the male dominated leaders of this nation we also have no confidence in our women. For myself, I support women but what I have experienced during my time when I ran against the men is very tough. We cannot just go against our men, because of our culture and we always respect our men as a Melanesian country. But today I believe the outcome of this motion; I am not pinpointing anyone as being wrong on which side but I believe the outcome of this motion today if a new government is formed, we have to prove to this nation that we can make a change to this nation and our people.

I am very sorry to see our leaders being never satisfied. One thing I see during my time in government, when there is no stability in government you will see some leaders go across to the other side. It was like we just came here to fish and then go back, this is the kind of situation which our people are now suffering today. Even our students who are at the universities still waiting for their allowances, they do not receive because of such attitude our leaders have. We cannot fulfill the promises give to our people, we, we cannot work together to achieve it but keep on arguing. We were just arguing over the position of PM of this country. This is my view as a woman of this country and what are my experiences working with male dominant leaders of this country. I do not support this motion.

**The SPEAKER:** Be reminded that we are running against time so try and keep your contributions as brief as possible.

**Hon. SAMUEL MANETOALI** (*Gao/Bugotu—Minister for Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Meteorology*) (03:32): Thank you Mr Speaker for that opportunity to talk on this motion. I take your points so maybe I will speak less than 5 minutes. I would like to thank the honorable leader of independent for moving this motion. I do not want to speak today but the mover of the motion said earlier today, the Minister for Environment and Member for Gao Bugotu to come this side. Now, I wanted to respond to him, and also the honorable member for East

Honiara, he said that some ministers must also talk and now I take this opportunity to satisfy the ideas of my two honorable colleagues.

Before I answer the question from the leader of independent, I would like to say that I have entered parliament in 2006, and have been serving under four prime ministers. The first one is our current prime minister, and I was the minister of Justice and Legal Affairs then. My good friend the independent leader now, move a motion sometimes later and he become the prime minister, and I was his minister as well. I was the Minister of Police and National Security at the time, then he also move me around. He then move me to become the minister for lands, the idea of pushing ministers around already started from him when he was the prime minister.

After the 2010 election, I become the minister of culture and tourism for the prime minister at the time. The member of parliament for Rendova Tetepari, the former minister of MDPAC. I was not resigned from my ministry but he was the one who resigned. And then another new government came in, the former Member of Parliament for Gizo Kolobagara and I completed the port folio of Culture and Tourism and we managed to host the popular FOPA. When I came in the 2014 elections I become the Minister for Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Meteorology under the current Prime Minister. In the past I am one of the first to resign under his leadership but today I am with him in paradise. I stick with him and I stand with him as a minister in his government.

Sometimes in August you may have seed at the front of the newspaper saying that three ministers have been sacked. They are the Minister for Infrastructure, the former minister for Mines and the Minister for Environment. At around 7:00pm I saw the newspaper and I thought I was sacked and no longer the minister of Environment. At about 9:00pm the Prime Minister's office called me on the phone and said they did not know about that news item. I have been sacked for two hours but I did not know who sacked me. After that I continue to support our honorable Prime Minister until today.

I am happy that my ministry have done a lot and I did not heard any complain from the mover of the motion today. It simply means that my ministry have done a lot for this country the Ministry for Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Meteorology. You will heard that the former deputy Prime Minister with the delegation have signed the USD\$87Million when they went to Korea which is the green climate fund where the minister of Environment must always go to the meeting overseas. So at least it is one of the success and more success is there with that ministry. So it is hard for me to runaway from this ministry, I must help this ministry until whoever have dropped this government.

Some of the good things this government would like to do and one is the traditional governance where the ministry of Peace have handle or deal with it. That our chiefs in the villages and even myself in one of the conference I announce to my chiefs that the DCC government will help out with the work of the chief in this country. I am crying with that policy because I want that policy but today I am sorry that DCC will be going down. However later my good friend the independent leader will reconsider his motion later. I am sorry to listen to his speech when he said that one officer in the Prime Minister's office which he talked about today. This is a sad thing, myself and the North East Guadalcanal are culture and custom people. For him to talk about somebody not a politician because we are the politician, we are the government.

The chief of staff is just an employee of the government. Our job is to discipline him and throw him out is the work of the government and politician but not him. He must apologize on this one and if he is not, but just withdraw this motion. But by the look of it the number game is what we are dealing with but if possible I ask him my brother and also my good friend to withdraw the motion and you took Aoke/Langalanga and Small Malaita and cross over here. One of you to be the DPM, Finance and Fishery but that was his decision and I want to give him just a advice.

I also want to look at the political party integrity act 2014 when it came into force. I also put this up once when some people went out, the mover of the motion himself that when he resigned from the government, did he also resign from the Political Parties Commission and whether the Commission has already agreed with his resignation is my question. Then my good friend, the Member for Lau/Mbaelelea said tome at that time, 'Member for Isabel, we have already moved'.

That is the point I want to make. Maybe later on we can work to amend the Political Parties Integrity Act, change a few things in the Act so that it suits our country's political situation.

Lastly, I always ask the Government for the mini-cannery and roads for my constituency, but the Government is still to help me but I am not giving up, I still stand with the Government and therefore, I do not support this Motion.

**Hon. JOHN MANENIARU** (*West Are Are—Minister for Finance and Treasury*) (03:41): Thank you Mr Speaker for the opportunity to allow me to also sing along with the chorus on this very important Motion - the Motion of No Confidence against the Prime Minister and the DCC Government. I should not take the floor, but the Member for East Honiara wanted the Minister for Finance to speak. I respect him and also a former member of the Kandere Party which I am the wing leader.

I want to thank the Prime Minister for his bold decision in accepting and to challenge this motion of no confidence against him and his Government on the floor, so that the reasons as to why this motion came about will come on the floor

of Parliament. So far we have heard some of them and some are yet to speak, but since you have put the pressure on the time so we cannot listen to more Speakers. I want to thank the Prime Minister for his decision, so that we can hear what are the reasons. I joined my colleague on the Government side to say that we do not hear any substance which backs this motion to ask the Prime Minister to step down and not to have confidence on him. I do not hear! I only hear mere excuses, it is like a child crying to his/her father for ice block and lolly. When I heard that, I was very embarrassed. I felt so bad because some of the Colleague left the Government yesterday, they should be sitting on this side before the motion is passed, so that we can be seen as a Government. You blamed the Minister for Finance, I am very sad because I am not answerable to the financial affairs of this nation for the last three years. My colleagues who resigned from the Government should help me to give answer to the motion of no confidence against the Prime Minister and the Government for not performing in the last three years. That is a disappointing thing that happened to me. This is because some of our key ministers have resigned from the Government and they are responsible for what has happened in the nation for the last three years. They are, including ourselves here. I see that as very unfair because they blamed us for everything since we are on the Government side. But our former colleagues who have left yesterday and are sitting on the opposing side are exempted, and that is to me what is unfair in this Motion.

Nevertheless, I have heard the reasons for the Motion of No Confidence and it did not convince me and therefore I as a Member for West Are constituency on behalf of my people would like to inform the House that I did not support this motion.

The No Confidence Motion on the DCCG started when the DCCG started to come together on an island; the No Confidence Motion started from that very moment when we did not even formed the government yet. There are people out there that do not want the DCCG, for whatever reasons, I do not know. But I was one of them. That was the very moment it started and it almost cost lives including my life. I would like to outline it this way.

Then some of our colleagues, the original DCCG that made promises and assurance to this nation for delivery of policy implementation for four years have walked over to the other side, including the Leader of the Independent, the mover of this Motion. They left the DCCG but they were the original ones. We were the ones that made the original promise and assurance to this country that we are going to liberate it, we are going to grow the economy. This is all in the policy. At the moment we are all struggling with the policy but whose policy is it. Whose policy?

I would like to flag this to give us the trend of life of this regime.

Then Members of Parliament continue to resign. We went and get them back and then they resigned again to join the other side and we got them back. That went on in the last two years. I am saying all these things because I am with the government all along. And when I see see this, I join our sister colleague here to say that I am saddened to see this happen at the toppest and the highest level of leadership in this nation on this floor of Parliament. It saddens me.

Why I remain with this government is because I almost lost my life for it and I made the commitment that I am going to help this DCCG Government to do whatever little they can do to the country, in their capacity, in their caliber and in their capability what you can do. But I know, it is not simple. It is a challenge because our country's economy continues to dive down, it continues going down. Who is going to be responsible. Who? It is us, the 50 Members, and I continue to reiterate that the 50 Members of this House putting their minds together, their differences aside, their personality behind and this country before us will work. It does not matter what sort of magic you come with it or a new government, I do not see it will work.

Now mass resignations have happened two weeks ago. I would like to congratulate my colleagues for making that bold decision as leaders. I respect you for that. They have the reasons for doing so. So far I have been sitting here, listening, I am still to hear any goods reasons that would convince me why they would not be part of the government as to why they have left the DCCG, their original government.

Party executives for that matter continue to go against the Prime Minister and the Government. Party Executives, the Presidents - PAP, United Democratic Party, only the Kandere Party remains loyal with this government for the three years. Can you understand that, Mr Speaker? Not at all. I fail short to comprehend. Even the executive that formed this Government from day one three years ago went against this Government until this very hour, and so I expect these hardships.

Every time I work I can see that it is not easy. But I just make the commitment to continue because it is only four years. I made the commitment that whatever little I can do is all that is asked of me as the Member for West Are Are constituency to contribute to the building of this nation.

That is what I am seeing and it continues. Our executives have split, they are no longer with us and so who do you expect. Why? It is because they have their personal agendas and not this nation. It is all lies. They have been telling lies to the nation in their public statements. I have been following everything they were saying, and I am disappointed with this because they continue to lie to their parties, to party members and this nation as they are parties to the Coalition. I must state this very clear and boldly on this floor of Parliament. And that is already unfair.

Let me congratulate the new government and all the best to you. They said they are going to do miracles. Someone has already alluded to that sentiment. Who is new in this new government? And I excuse those who are not yet ministers. Those of you who have been ministers already in the last House and this House, it is going to be challenging for you. We all have worked and we know the weaknesses of this system and we know the weaknesses of our leaders as well. So when we talk about liberating this country in the remaining 10 months of this House, I want to say and I will pray in support of the new government, but it is not going to be easy.

The system needs us to proactively go in and make reforms. This is not happening so who is going to do it? When you say you are going to do it, I do not think so. What are you going to do in these 10 months? Unfortunately, the same handful of people who have been with this government have gone over to the other side, so are you going to convince the Minister for Finance that you are going to do it? They have done it in three years, longer than the remaining 10 months left. There are only 10 months left. We have been together there for three years, and that is 36 months. I congratulate them because we made progress on the implementation of our policies.

I thank my colleagues who have been with the Government that at least the DCCG has recorded they have implemented their policies in the environment accorded to them. Talking about implementation of policies, we cannot do that if we do not have the funds. When there are no funds, those policies will continue to remain policies that will not be implemented because there are no resources to back it up. That is the reality.

When taking up the Minister for Finance portfolio, I was shocked to see more than \$200million waiting to be paid and there is no cash for those debts. I have been looking for ways to address this because it is urgent and serious. That is real. So when you say you are going to implement the policies, even in the next 12 months, it is very doubtful because it is the same system that is going to implement the budget. And if you have not taken any efforts and initiatives to really look at what has gone wrong in the past, it is going to be challenging. But I trust the new bloods combined with old bloods. of course, that is a good combination in terms of implementation. I look forward to that.

I say this because I am someone who has been working in the ministries, and I feel guilty when I do not perform my duties and when I go late to the office. I am sweating but you can say that I have not done anything. What I am saying is the reality of our system when we promise policy implementation to our people. It is going to fall short because there are other key elements that need to support it.

As to why my colleagues have gone over to the other side is still a mystery. They are trying to state their reasons but I do not think those are valid reasons. I thought

about a meeting we had in Caucus and Cabinet reflecting on what had happened and what had gone wrong. They came up with their reasons. One is their own personal matters and nothing to do with leadership and implementation. I say this because the points they raised against the Prime Minister are unjustifiable.

Who was with the Prime Minister? Caucus and Cabinet. If we are real leaders, we should have confronted our Prime Minister and told him we are not happy with what he has been doing. I cannot recall a record of that in the last three years in Caucus and Cabinet. No one has challenged him by telling not to do such and such or that they are not happy with him.

Just now I am hearing this about the office, nothing has been done in Cabinet and what are we talking about here. If we are leaders who put this country as the first priority, these are just petty issues that should have been sorted out. That is why we elected the Prime Minister. If he does not listen after we talked to him then who is he to do so? We have the numbers and we can put him out and that should be what is happened, but no, it has not happened that way.

One time we have been talking and I told everyone that our government is in the hands of our seniors, I honor and respect you all. Us the new ones are here to support you and if you make the right decisions then we are good, but if you are making wrong decisions then we are not good, and we agree with East Kwaio.

When the Prime Minister entertains them, they went and do another meeting and while we wait for decisions, we continue to support. This nation needs all of us to continue to advance it. They go and make decisions, that time I pointed them out: Ministry of Development Planning and Aid Coordination, Ministry of Finance, Prime Minister, just the three of you; if you make it good we will be good, but if you do it wrong then that is why all the fingers are pointing to the Prime Minister.

I say that this is unfair, I have been here for three years and this is unfair. I believe that those things are not done here but outside and we are hearing it now on the floor today. We have our own reasons, I agree with member of parliament for Shortlands because the administration of those projects and programs are not done consistently and accountably for the members and we argued on the things. For me that is healthy, but we must not say that those things have worked out flowingly, it has not, but we are optimistic that it we will continue to improve these systems and they will be accountable. It is true, what are the projects that contribute to this interest?

The Tina Hydro Project was mentioned, and let me say, it has been with the government for many years, more than three years, seven years. It was there and we cannot push it forward because it did not come into Cabinet, it was held back for whatever reasons. When I was at Finance, we pushed it forward and we should have went for the negotiation, whether you like it or not we are going to make this

project happen. It should have happened but because we are here it has cancelled. It is after seven years, and this is a project we have promised to this country, but we are holding it back because of our own personal interests. I have to say it that way. I would like to be fair by commenting like that because I was in the government as it will now be a caretaker government.

With regards to the shareholding arrangement of Tina Hydro, it is like this, if shareholding goes up and equity goes and is going to make the tariff higher than Solomon Power then the Tina Hydro is not viable. Therefore, whichever shareholding put to ICSI and with the landowners, if the rate that comes out is higher than Solomon Power's rate then this project is not worth pursuing because this project is all about cheaper rate of power in this country so that it encourages investment in this country. We can therefore put it in but it will be very expensive. That is what negotiation is centered on, so we must not confuse ourselves. We want shareholders to be our local resource owners as well and it must also go to ICSI but it is going to be a give and take. If we want this country, it does not matter if we secure fundings through grant or loan, but at the end of day that is basically what the project is all about, a cheaper power rate in this country.

In terms of our people on Guadalcanal, GPPOL used to be the SIPL and when GPPOL finished and is now GPPOL, the Government now recognises its people. That is a government investment through ICSI, and here we have an opportunity. But the direct benefits we want for our people initially, if electricity goes to them, the road reaches them, there are infrastructures, and we look after their housing scheme, to me that is something of value to our local people in those catchment areas.

I want to talk now on the cable project which has been with the Government for more than three years now, and it still cannot move. I am now ready to move it but time is short. I have started to clear the blockages to this project. We have heard all the talking and the interest that came out with regards to this project, and I am aware of those.

We also talked about shipping grants. These are things that we have talked so much on and it might have upset our colleagues. I am also one who has not received my top up and my people say that I am a corrupt person, I took 4 million which went to West Are, are but you expect me to buy ships that are cheaper like those at the market. I told that to the Caucus and Government and today I am still to get one because it is not easy.

On the Anti-Corruption Bill all of us supported it but if we take the minutes from the Caucus there are handful of Caucus members who are not supporting it. As for the Portfolio reshuffle, I have heard that me being a Minister for Finance made some angry and to support that they said the portfolio at the Finance is not negotiable but

it took almost three months for my Prime Minister to ask and convince me to accept that offer. I am not interested in that post but it came to a time that he demanded me to take and so this is not a reshuffle where it is for Kandere Party. The Kandere Party which is there is committed to serve the Coalition.

I would like to touch on finance. When I came to this ministry I had several meetings with the Ministry of Finance just to update my colleague from East Honiara. I had one meeting with the whole staff on the week that I went in. It was a first meeting in a very long time for the staff of the Ministry to be part of. One person told me that it was after 15 years and other told me that it was after 20 years and I wondered if that was what has been happening there. In my places that I work we got to do meetings, you as a political leader meet with your staff, direct them and help them to understand implementations of the policy and those are the things that I am looking forward to do. Now we had a meeting with the core economic working group and our donor partners after consultation which East Kwaio has reported the approach in terms of the budget. Now our co partners are starting to come on board with the staff of my ministry, the Prime Minister's office, MDPAC which all teamed up to make consultation engagement with the technical people of our donor partners. We have left them out in the cold for three years. What will we do on our own and that is why we are struggling. They are our development partners and have the resources to support us. They have not come on board 100 percent, for whatever reasons, I cannot dwell on them.

Looking at what we have done in the ministry so far was good, and there are still more work needs to be done. To reform the Ministry of Finance will take time, but I am glad to inform you and the House that our staffs are now working cooperatively, collectively to address issues together, as I mentioned earlier with MDPAC and the Ministry of Finance.

I am going to pull in the permanent secretaries as the core group to lead the implementation of the policy as well as monitoring the outcomes because that is where the budget is. But that may not be possible for me now with the understanding of what we are talking on now. Sound leadership within the DCCG only hinges on these. It was only recently that some of us elevated ourselves because the vacancies are there, and that is why you start to hear us talking.

On the reshuffle, I would like to say that in May this year, a whole reshuffle exercise by the Prime Minister was made on all of us leaders. I also received it. As the wing leader of the Kandere Party, I also received it. And so I called my party members together and a couple of times we sat down and talked about it as to why he proposed the reshuffle and why it will affect this and that. The report of the exercise is there. If those leaders have not seen this report, then I do not know where they have been all those times. But we have the opportunity as a party to look at it. That is why I said that my party members from Kandere will not deny it because I have

worked my best to ensure they are all included in this whole process, they are aware. I consulted them and when it comes to the worst case scenario, I informed them and helped them to understand because it is not my decision but the decision of the Prime Minister.

One time we were talking about it in Caucus, and I told them that I am scared of this because it is not my right and authority to make the reshuffles. And I would like to make an Are Are metaphor on this - you cannot force to sleep with the wife of another man. You cannot force him to sleep with Small Malaita. And so I respect him because it is his decision and so I cannot interfere with him. I want to put it that way so that it is clear.

Our national priority is to reform our country. I am here to help and support because I am one of the 50 members despite being on this side. This country belongs to us and we must do whatever we can to support it. Why these things happen is because we are shortsighted? It is because we are busy with other things and not this country's portfolio responsibility.

I also think it is good for us ministers to have time to report on our ministries on what we have done for the last three years and so forth. This is a challenge made to us ministers by the MP for East Honiara. This would be very good but you Mr Speaker did not give us time and so we just go along with you. But it would be very interesting as to how we, the ministers representing the people of this nation and our coalition government have gone about the mandate of implementing our budget and policies.

They were some mention about things in finance, as I have already stated when making my statement. If I am given the time I will focus on reforming finance. Our revenue is very low but we need to start planting and not only rely on a few sources we have. We have to be serious about the infrastructures that connects us to grow our economy. Those are priorities on my agenda.

I have been talking to my stakeholders, SOEs, donor partners and everybody are stakeholders. have started that process. I am looking forward when the time comes that we will jointly and collectively try to implement the budget of our government which represents the livelihoods of our people.

Touching on projects, and the MP for Shortlands is a bit jealous of West Are' Are on oil palm. Our oil palm projects is with the ministry. It is not going to be removed because the system is very weak. Since 2016, I have take on the Waisi Oil Palm project, a 10 year nursery but the experts in agriculture said they will just diamond cut on it. I think the MP for North West Choiseul will know this terminology in agriculture. They said they will diamond cut on it. Okay. The diamond cut on this 10 years nursery for them to plant it, and I continue to support them. What I am

getting at is that our system is what I encourage you to look at it when you take over the government.

*Mr Rick Houenipwela interjecting:*

Not yet.

**Hon. JOHN MANENIARU:** Well, almost.

Because it cannot work. I have to go every day and sit with my colleague minister who is now the Minister for Rural development. He will agree with what I am saying. We sit down together, the task force, even our boys have to write up the TOR for us to discuss it. That is how difficult to get projects throughout our system. If we just wait, it will not come because it will not be delivered, you have to go yourself. And I as the Member for West Are Are have to go straight to the ministry literally walking into the offices. If you do not do that, nothing will happen, even though they are there. The worse situation now is they will say 'if there is budget for it'. There are no money. More than \$200 million of queing up payments are still there. Who is going to put the priority payment?

That is the system we are practicing now and are now getting used to it. These are the realities we have. I have seen a lot of reforms and that is what is in my project. I believe any new government in the next year can give us light as we go on with this.

I will stop here, but it challenges all of us. We will continue to jump there and here and personal matters have taken precedence over this country's priority hence we will not be able to go any where. At the moment we are going round in circles.

The PPI Act, and I want to call it the Political Party Grasshopper Act. We must change it as it makes us look stupid. We are leaders and when we come here that Act should not facilitate us. It should not be there in the first place. Its right name is what I have stated. I am the wing leader of my party and was when I saw my party members leaving. I said to myself what am I going to do as the wing leader. What can I do? Am I going to go and cry after them, begging them to come back? But that is the result of this Act. We have to do something about it. I ask the new government to look seriously into this.

In terms of acts relating to finance, I have already scheduled them including the Constituency Development Act. There is a big reform so that it helps us align our investments as well as our donor partners. They highly criticized us on those legislations so we have to frame it in a way they can see. They are good legislations for the noble objectives they are established for. I am very happy about this but there is need to sort out a few things so that our people benefit from it, it is easy for us to work with because at the moment it is not.

I am just highlighting some of these issues. I am very surprised at what we are going through at this time. But we are politicians, this is something not new to our Parliament but continue to learn from it. I am happy that this is an opportunity for me to learn about these kinds of issues in our country.

We are all responsible and we take responsible decisions which belongs to us and our people. Nonetheless, I want to congratulate everyone for being leaders in making responsible decisions on behalf of yourselves, your people, and for our country as we aspire to lead our country into prosperity. With those few comments, I do not support the Motion.

**Hon. JOHN MOFFAT FUGUI** (*Central Honiara—Minister for Public Service*) (04:16): Thank you for recognizing the Member for Central Honiara, and I will make a very short contribution.

I just want to make some remarks to clear the ground. First, 10 months is a very long time. We can break down governments even in a few weeks. Those who say that 10 months is very short is not right. No, it is a long period of time. Secondly, you cannot run government on a business model. No, it is very different. Thirdly, in government, in politics, leadership is the end of it, whether ministers make mistake whether it is the problem of the Prime Minister, you stand to answer in the end.

I wrote this speech when the Prime Minister reshuffled me about few weeks ago so I hope it is relevant, and I hope I am wrong. But I have done a little bit of a psycho analysis on what leadership is.

So what is wrong with the Sogavare leadership? I ask the Prime Minister to forgive me if I am wrong. If I am wrong, that is okay, but if I am right then maybe next time we can make new changes to our government in terms of its leadership.

When I learned that a motion of no confidence was moved against the Prime Minister, I was not alone. It is an open secret that the Prime Minister rarely has the embrace necessary to keep us ministers and backbenchers together, as we wanted. This is not news because the Prime Ministers falls and continues to falter to learn the niceties and proper queues required for political leadership.

Here is a prime minister because you are asking 'what is wrong with the prime minister'. He is a Prime Minister who professes to have learned from other former Prime Ministers, in particular the late Solomon Mamaloni, yet he is devoid of the leadership spirit, essential to lead Solomon Islands in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and not the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Sogavare enjoys the exercise of the old British tactics of divide and rule, a political strategy useful only when Cooks were kings. Look for that in the dictionary, and

that is your job, Mr Speaker, so that what is not right to absent in a Sogavare leadership is the question and is a telling question. I have a brief for you.

Firstly, as an individual, the Prime Minister is an isolationist, unlike the other prime Ministers, he does not have much aura of the gravitation to draw people to him. That is one of Sogavare's inherent landmark deficiencies. The individual does not have the quality that exudes simple kindness or compassion. Most people see Sogavare as a man to himself, and a strong man. He does not need you and he does not me. That is okay in politics. When you talk to him, he is listening, and he is also not listening. If he is forthcoming most times, it is because the person has an obvious repeater or a pre-determined position. That is why his ministers and backbenchers find it awkward, if it is already unpleasant to engage in difficult conversations. He talks with fixed positions unless he sees personal benefits. Rarely does he succumb unless the agenda is one that has pecuniary benefits.

Second, you are looking for answers so I am giving you answers. Sogavare lives in a life of clenched fist. Let me explain because you want an explanation. In other words, he is not a terribly generous person and because he is an isolationist, living a life of a clenched fist is an expected consequence. In other words, these qualities work together, these are nice bed fellows. Ministers admit they find it difficult to seek assistance or help; not all ministers but some ministers, and I have heard this, from the leader in times of need. In other words, the leader looks after himself first before he considers helping others, including his ministers and backbenchers. In instances where assistance was rendered, it was only because it was available. It was not easy.

Third, the Prime Minister is a good decision maker. The Prime Minister is a poor decision maker. Let me explain it. Often when Caucus and Cabinet make decisions, if their leader is not in concert – he does not agree, he would stall the decision, halt it, drag his feet on it, ignores it or changes direction on Caucus and Cabinet conclusions. In the end, when the decision is made, it can be seen that what he decides on is different from what apparently appears in the end or is implemented. That shows we are not consistent in our decisions. It could be we are very good or we are very poor in making decisions.

Put it another way - he rides risks when decisions are monetary in nature, examples, let me give you the examples, the Lord Howe iron rods, why did you keep those iron rods in the Central Bank. You tell me why? I am waiting for an answer. You are keeping iron rods in there that are not worth anything. Why are you keeping them in the Central Bank? Tell me, tell me that one. If you do not tell me now, you will tell me afterwards.

The Lord Howe bechedemer project. It is a very big project that brought people in here, but you did not listen to the ministry responsible so what was happened to it?

Then the other one is the Skyline project, which was mentioned already. NAZZER company, Optic Fiber Cable project which was suspected to have kickbacks. You tell me whether this is true or not true? If you want examples to look on how we make decisions or how we did not make decisions.

These are cases in point. He even involved himself in West Papua. This is a bad project. Not at all. West Papua is a case that we do not need to involve ourselves in. Why? Because you are facing Indonesia, even Papua New Guinea who is the next door neighbor does not talk about this but you were involving yourselves on this. What is the reason, what is its logic and what is your policies in these. This is an internal problem of Indonesia. This was an obvious diplomatic visit, we have an Ambassador in Jakarta who can attend to such matter.

Fourthly, the Prime Minister is not a UDP man. This is the first time for you to hear this, Mr Speaker, rather he is a SOCREP believer, he believes in SOCREP policies. He does not believe in UDP policies, he joins UDP only when he needed UDP for the Prime Minister's position. That is very clear enough. I was thinking why is the Prime Minister like that, how are decisions not like this, why are all those things the Minister for Finance was talking about did not work out like what we wanted. Something must be wrong in what we are thinking. Take, for instance, Mr Speaker, because I am seeing that you are looking very differently, the two cases of traditional governance and the land policy which the Minister for Lands talked about were only dealt with this year when it is the flagship policy of one of the coalition parties and so it should be taken care of at the start. Everything they were saying is good but what is wrong is because it came in very late. If we had started it this year, next year is election year we will not be doing it. We must make sure that every time there is a coalition all their flag policies must be taken into account by implementing them early, and not late. Mr Speaker, are you listening? This one is late because it was only this year that we started to address it. And this is the reason.

When we talk about the Anti-Corruption Bill and the Whistle Blowers Bill, I am one MP who spoke out in Caucus and Cabinet about how to balance it. The Anti-Corruption Bill is okay because that is the global governance agenda. But when it comes to the Solomon Islands context, we have to balance it with traditional governance so that the way you use government funds is balanced with how people put demands on Members of Parliament so that if it is not balanced Members of Parliament will be corrupt.

What we are saying is that you build the institutions, bring in the policies but you must balance it with what is really on the ground in terms of our people. Often times the things we talk about are good but when you go with the Member of Parliament and their constituents, that is where there is no rule, so that when you put the anti-corruption and we pass it, we are going to be in trouble because how

we put that bill and the act of Parliament that governs us and its application is not balanced.

**Hon. Manasseh Sogavare:** Point of Order! Thank you Speaker, it is going towards 4.30pm and the Member for Central Honiara is firing up now so I seek your consent to move a suspension of Standing Order 10 in accordance with Standing Order 81.

**The SPEAKER:** Leave is granted.

**Hon. Manasseh Sogavare:** I move that Standing Order 10 be suspended in accordance with Standing Orders 81 to permit the continuation of business until adjourn by the Speaker in accordance with Standing Orders 10(5).

*(question agreed to)*

**Hon. John Moffat Fugui:** Thank you Mr Speaker and let me also thank the Prime Minister for his support. I was just making an important point and so I need to slow down.

When you are creating an institution, here you are bringing in the Anti-Corruption Bill, coming from outside to us, and all around the world have anti corruption bills. You have to look at how Members of Parliament deal with our constituencies and our people and there is no bill or an Act of Parliament, you will be in trouble.

What some of us are saying is that when you bring in the Anti-Corruption Bill, it is okay, because we are governed as a family of nations but we need to ensure that what happens outside is also taken care of, so that when we introduce the Traditional Governance Bill, the way we govern and look after ourselves will make sense because the Anti-Corruption Bill will deal with all of us in this country, but leaders especially on how we run our constituencies. Only then there is no void and it will be complimentary. Is that clear?

This is the same reason why I am against you with regards to the CEDAW. On CEDAW I said that CEDAW is okay, and again it is a global agenda where the whole world wants CEDAW, only you and me do not like it, the way we always see it. CEDAW is okay but it cannot impose its ideas to us once we do not take into account our cultures and traditions so that when they meet they can do the exchange so that it makes it much easier. The checks and balance, in other words, what parliamentary democracy talks about. Check and balance, we check it. For us people of the sea, it is very clear; a metaphor of people of the sea. If you are sitting down inside a canoe make sure the canoe and you are one so that the canoe does not rock in waves or capsize into the sea. That is what we should be doing. So that when you bring in traditional governance late like this, I have questions. Come early so that we can deal with so many things including this Anti-corruption Bill, the Whistleblowers Bill, CEDAW and the Family Protection Act. What we are doing is that we are balancing the legislation or the Acts of Parliament with what is

happening on the ground with us so that we are not troubled. Are you clear on this? You must be clear, because the gallery is packed and they need to understand it as well, and not point fingers, but make sure that we, the legislators make the laws and the policies to balance it so that whoever is in Parliament, and I am a former Minister for Education and then former Minister of Public Service can support our Prime Minister in five minutes when we do the voting. So that we are not all over the place.

When members of the public force us not to take up or take up the Anti-Corruption Bill, I was surprised, because it means the information and message that went out to balance things is not there. All of us support it but make sure, make very very sure when you use money on somebody who dies, it must be inside the Act of Parliament, and it is not just ordinary custom practice. That is what I am saying so that in the end when the Anti-Corruption Bill is passed, you cannot charge me because it is inside the Act Parliament under good governance.

And I would like to thank the Prime Minister for giving me an assignment on good governance concept for me to work with because he told me that his officers did not understand it. I can help them with it, unfortunately we do not have enough time so that I can finish it, and then he gave me \$10,000 for the work I will be doing. That is the kind of help we want so that we do not point fingers at anyone. What we are saying here is do this, do not do that, do this, do this, do that. That is it. That is our job in Caucus and Cabinet.

Finally, I am almost placing too much on my in-law, the Prime Minister. Almost using the 1984 George Orwell's Book which says the Prime Minister wants to involve what is called doublespeak. Let me explain it. Doublespeak is when we say one thing, but hides or denies or do not admit others. That is an essence of governance. That is not his problem, that is my problem. That is the essence of governance because once you pass a legislation or a policy, sometimes it works but in between when you see there is need to change it, you change it. But when you change it, make sure everybody knows about it. That is my only complaint.

Finally, when I was the Minister for Education, I was doing a lot of things - USD\$16.9million for the new campus, huge number of scholarships so much so the Leader of the Independent Group complained about me. Yes, and you were there. He asked me why I send students to AMA. And so I said to him in the evening when parents were praying and their children are in schools, they say 'Good Lord, we thank you very much for sending our children, our future to school so that they do not just stay here doing nothing in Solomon Islands'.

We have been doing a lot of good things. Then my problem is that he changed me when I was still in Fiji. I was still talking to the USP Vice Chancellor, Professor Rajesh Chandra so that we can have two vice chancellors. I told the Vice Chancellor

and the groups in Fiji that the next Vice Chancellor of USP must be a Solomon Islander. I will not mention names here because we are still lobbying. We must make Solomon Islands, the second biggest contributor to the USP the next vice chancellor, and then the second vice chancellor of SINU is a Solomon Islander.

Mr Speaker, do you want to hear that? You are being very quiet. I want you to say yes or no because during that time I was still talking for the goodness of this country, the Prime Minister changed me. I wish he could have waited until I returned so that he consulted me. I want him to say, Minister, I want you to go this way for the good of our government'. That was what made me very angry. I was flabbergasted and fatigue. I was very, very angry when he did that because I did a lot of good things and yet he changed me.

Mr Speaker, if you become the next Prime Minister of the country, let me tell you how to do it. Are you ready? When you change ministers and if you want to, please the minimum courtesy is to wait until they come, you talk with them, they agree or they are angry then you change them. But you do the minimum courtesy of saying yes to them because you respect them. I hope you hear this.

Finally, I have put in more than one agendas but they did not listen to them. One agenda, I think I have mentioned four times already inside Parliament. Tomorrow, we can count how many times I have mentioned this from Hansard reports. I am talking about a second city. Do you hear this? Nowadays, if you are listening, one of the greatest things that change nations now are cities, cities, smart cities and the rest of them. I think I heard the Member for East Honiara talked about townships. I am not talking about townships. Townships do not do anything to anyone. The Member is listening and he can agree or angry with me, that is alright as we can deal with it later. But cities is the key word now. If we put a second city in Solomon Islands, everyone from Malaita who is here must go back to Malaita in time because we are going to develop a city so that we can distribute our population aside, not growth centres. Mr Speaker, are you listening? Not even economic exclusive zones but cities. I hope you are listening. That is what I am very disappointed about because I also mentioned it during the 2014 flood, but since then nothing has happened until now.

The second thing I am disappointed about is I have mentioned in Caucus that we must send an apology to the Israel Embassy in Canberra. Why is that? Until second coming when Christ comes again, Israel will be so important to the heart, the development and the leadership of nations all over the world. Twice, you have offended Israel already in 1982 and 2013. For 1982, I do not have to speak on it because I do not know the details, but in 2013 it was when you and the NCRA Government voted against Israel at the UN when we gave recognition in favour of Palestine to be an observer status. You go against Israel like that, you are doomed and you are done. Unless we make an apology to Israel we will not develop. I am

telling you this. If you have doubts ask my brother Auga who has just been to Israel a few weeks ago. I am also a man from Lau and Mbaelelea and so I am speaking as a Lau and Mbaelelea man that if you do not give an apology to Israel then you are finished today. I thank you.

**The SPEAKER:** Honourable Members, I think debate on the motion is enough so I will call on the Honourable Prime Minister to deliver his response to the motion moved against him.

**Hon. MANASSEH SOGAVARE** (*East Choiseul—Prime Minister*) (04:39): Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Thank you very much because when we started, the mover of the Motion asked me if I can consider tendering my resignation to which I made very clear that I will not do so because I want us to discuss what are the reasons behind what is happening now which is triggered by the movement of the former members of the DCCG. That is actually where this motion is sparked off. If these people had not moved, no matter how much we might be shouting issues in here, we would not go anywhere.

I guess the reality of the situation now since that movement happened, I guess the three coalitions on the other side of the House, the lose coalitions have agreed on their objective to move this Motion of No confidence against the Prime Minister and is the constitutional way of removing a government. When a Prime Minister is removed it is also removing the Government. In fact, the Political Party Integrity Act that we are working now does not have the supporting constitutional amendment with it. If that constitutional amendment had been made, we do not have to come and argue here on the floor of Parliament as this matter can be addressed right there within the group. And there will be no need to come and bother the Opposition and the Independent Groups as it can be done within the group. Because of that, we have to come to Parliament to debate this motion because that is the constitutional way of removing a government, and you have to remove the Prime Minister in order to remove a government.

I want to thank everyone. I think the House has heard enough from everyone on both sides of the House, and so I thank you, Sir, for giving me the opportunity to respond to the issues that have been tendered to the House by the mover of the Motion – the Member for North East Guadalcanal.

Sir, I expected a bit more to be said by him on the reasons why so that I can be convinced that yes, these are the reasons. And so I joined the other colleagues who have spoken before me to express our disappointment. Because the reasons tendered by the MP for North East Guadalcanal and Leader of the Independent Group failed to convince any right thinking normal individual to be convinced to support a motion like this.

We are in a very awkward position because as he said it when moving the motion that the number is already here so why should I be bothered saying anything further. So it becomes a number thing. The number has shifted and so a vote of no confidence motion is noticed. But I note your introductory statement Sir when you introduced the mover that the principles of democracy as the foundation and bedrock of our government system must always be upheld. So that is the reason why when the number shifts, we have the opportunity to put up a motion of no confidence so that the government is removed because it does not have the number. But I think we could be more responsible than that asking serious questions as to why that number has shifted. You are trying to ask that reason and that can only be answered by those people that shifted their allegiance away from the government.

Sir, I have been down this road before with this very man. Interestingly is the time he stood here in 2007. He was standing here or somewhere over there. This time he moved over there and so from here he shifted there, so next time we do not know where he is going to sit down. But I have been down this road with this man before and interestingly he has not even changed. He has not changed one bit. I have changed, but he has not!

*laughter!*

He is still the same opportunist who would not have second thought! He would jump at that opportunity. He does not have a second thought about allowing his integrity on the line, if gaining power is the ultimate outcome of his actions. This is exactly what he is right now. I am saying that because he actually confirmed that he moved the only successful motion of no confidence in the history of our parliamentary democracy. And he is holding the record. This is based on reasons that border on—and pardoned me—deliberate lies and misinformation. Coincidentally, his innocent victim that time in 2007 is the current Prime Minister and of course the subject of this very motion that we are debating now and we will be rounding up now.

I will have to qualify the next statement I am going to make and give reasons why I said it—and I want the nation to know that to become a prime minister again is the real motive of at least this mover. I am saying this because that is how he became Prime Minister in 2007. In fact, the Member for North West Guadalcanal who is the strategist behind this agenda did approach our members at the Heritage Park Hotel to campaign for the mover if he successfully gets Parliament to pass this motion. I guess the motive is quite clear as far he is concerned. That is what he called 'Plan B' of this agenda. And according to the Member for North West Guadalcanal, the plan is for five of their members to join the remaining GCCG members to form the next government, with the Member for North East Guadalcanal to be the prime minister.

The instruction is for our group to nominate the mover immediately after the passage of the motion. So for the Member for North East Guadalcanal, his strategist, the member for North West Guadalcanal and I guess, three others is the incentive and reason for supporting this motion.

I find it a bit difficult the reasons given by him to be convinced and in fact the statement says it has nothing to do with national interest. And we are to judge it by the points he listed earlier on. If that is all, then I am not convinced that this motion is done in the national interest because again as observed by others who have spoken, he is basically repeating some of the same reasons in 2007 when he moved the successful motion.

As a matter of fact, the Member for North East Guadalcanal is not the only member who is aspiring, there are not less than five aspiring prime ministers in the coalition of the three loose groups that rally behind this motion to remove the sitting Prime Minister. It would be interesting to note that removing the current Prime Minister is the only point of agreement between the three loose groups, and they are determined to achieve it. So 27 MPs are sitting down there without moving and they will achieve that objective.

Let us get it right that there is nothing wrong with anyone anyone aspiring to be Prime Minister. But the manner, timing and I guess circumstances surrounding the pursuance of this agenda questions the integrity and the character of people who are pursuing this agenda rallying the support of innocent MPs of Parliament who become hopeless tools at the hands of these people.

What I am really saying is Parliament would be very irresponsible to pass this motion just because somebody wants to become prime minister. My greatest disappointment with the mover is that he allowed himself to be used by the leadership of the group that left the government. This motion should really be moved by the MP for Rendova or the MP for Marovo or the former Deputy Prime Minister or the MP for West Honiara who are really the brains behind this motion, and we can go down the list who are really the brains behind this motion and have been strategizing for months under the cover of false loyalty to the Government.

Moreover, my other disappointment with the Opposition and the Independent Groups is that they become easy prey of the defectors. They swallowed their lies and misinformation and become accomplices in this sinister move to overthrow the Government because the defectors have now supported their agenda of removing the Prime Minister again for personal-selfish reasons. They resented the possibility of the Prime Minister completing a four-year term. This is how childish this whole issue has reached.

The plan, as earlier discussed, is as follows, and this is what I want the Opposition and Independent Groups to appreciate; the plan of the defectors is to get the support

of the Opposition and the Independent Group to make the number to remove the Prime Minister and then return to get the support of the sitting DCCG Group to continue the government under a new prime minister in the person of a number of people that have possibilities. In fact, names were suggested to our members and the name of the former Deputy Prime Minister also came up as a possible candidate.

The leadership of the defectors gave no second thought about their allegations, which only goes to prove how desperate we can become in fulfilling this evil desire of bringing down the Prime Minister because they personally hate him for reasons that I will elaborate in the course of this response.

The lightning swift manner in which they went about achieving their desire was mind-boggling. It left even the cleverest strategists grasping for breath. They used their positions as senior members of the group to attract the attention of members of the DCCG. To sever the minds of their victims, they employ evil tactics of advancing deliberate lies and misinformation to assassinate the character of the Prime Minister.

To solicit their agendas, they prepare standard letters of resignation for ministers and backbenchers to sign. The current Minister for Environment was asked by the Member for Rendova/Tetepare to sign his letter as he was about to board the plane for his official engagement overseas. The Member for Rendova/Tetepare underestimated the resolve of the Minister for Environment to protect his integrity, something which he himself does not give a damn about because he is the kind of person that is willing to trample upon his own integrity to achieve his heart's desire. He did that in 2010/11 and had to resign before he faced the Vote of No Confidence to protect himself from further embarrassment on the floor of Parliament.

Those who signed the standard letters of resignations were actually careless enough to sign them and become puppets of the ring leaders. The standard letters were very insulting. I actually read the letters and surprisingly they were all the same, not one is different.

The letters I received were very interesting. I received similar worded letters from the Member for West Kwara'ae, the Member for Mbaegu/Asifola, the Member for Shortlands, the Member for West Honiara and the Member for North Malaita. I was personally insulted by the letters, not necessarily by the content of the letters, maybe a little bit on the content, but the careless manner in which they were consented to by their signatories. Without going through an elaborate defense, it is suffice to say that most of these members are direct beneficiaries of the kind heart of the Government through the Prime Minister to approve their medical leave to Australia at the cost of the country's taxpayers. They are the ones who submitted the letters saying they do not have confidence in me, they do not trust me. If we do not trust each other, we will not commit the Government to send these people. Some of them

even spent up to three or four months in Australia to recover from their health problems.

Because of his pending case in court, the Chief of Staff had a difficult time convincing the Australian Government to grant the MP for Mbaegu/Asifola a visa to enter Australia. And so for me to receive such standard letters stating that we do not trust you, we do not have confidence in you is insulting. It can be better worded stating the true reasons why you made such a decision. I am personally hurt by that as a human being with feelings who is willing to help people.

While discussing this kind of attitude, I would like to take this opportunity to thank those who revoked their letters of resignation and returned to the Government and said sorry.

Except for the member for North Malaita, the MP for West Honiara, the MP for Marovo and the MP for Rendova/Tetepare who have personal issues against the Prime Minister, which I will elaborate on later on, all the other Members were innocent victims of the people who have issues against the Prime Minister. They were caught unprepared by the skillful manner in which the perpetrators of this motion lay their nets.

Very interesting, for the noting of Parliament, that the perpetrators of the move to overthrow the Government were blinded by their own personal hatred of the Prime Minister that they forgot they are guilty of some of the allegations themselves as I will elaborate later. This is in relation to their main allegation about the Prime Minister employing his nephew. In fact, if you look through the list of issues the mover stated as the underlying issues why the Prime Minister must step down, two issues came out very forcefully; first is the Prime Minister employing his nephew and also the Prime Minister's leadership style and as we now realize, the Prime Minister needs to come out on his private financial affairs.

It is just obvious that the mover of this motion is encouraged by his successful motion in 2007 to put his hands up to move the motion. And for the information of this House, not one of the substantive allegations levelled against me in the successful motion moved by the mover of this motion in 2007 can stand up. All of them were all rebutted and proven to be grossly defamatory and maliciously false. That is the nature of the animal we are facing now that even though how many good reasons we may try to put to people's heads, we are locked up already and we will take a very serious decision after the mover of this motion winds up the debate.

At the end of the day, what it all boils down to in 2007 were personal grudges and power hunger, camouflaged under the garb of pretentious concern for good governance and good leadership. Leadership style is what it is. Interestingly, I am hearing the same kind of sentiments again repeated as the content of this motion, especially the integrity of the allegations they raised.

The mover and those who spoke to the motion tabled a number of issues. To cover their reasons, they stated the Government mishandled the Tina River hydro project because it considers giving majority shares to Korean Waters. It is argued that the Government is the major funder of the project and therefore it is not right for the Government to give majority shares to Korean Waters. The other allegation is the Prime Minister employment of his own nephew, which I will touch on later on.

Another allegation they raised and which they then retracted in the newspaper is the allegation that we have received \$1million each. And I thank our two senior politicians for having the right sensible thinking by going back and correcting the record in the media that the three of us have received \$1million cheque each, and I the story was that I received mine in cheque and it was written in cash and so I cashed mine while the other two cannot cash theirs because the cheques were written in their names and they were afraid to cash it because it will leave a trail. I thank those two MPs for going out and clarifying that because that is really defamatory, it is just not right. And if we go to the extent of coming up with such a story just to convince the nation that the Prime Minister is corrupt, then it does not speak well of leaders.

The motion of no confidence is a constitutional provision and it is used only in the best judgement of any movers of this motion and not just because the number changes but because we really need to find out exactly the reason why people move making a change in the number.

There are some reference to the undersea cable project. I think during their private conversations which did not come out on the floor of Parliament that the Prime Minister has benefited from the kickbacks of that project. That is a serious allegation. And I thank these people for having sensible thinking not to advance this on the floor of Parliament because it could turn really nasty.

I am challenged by the Member for Central Honiara that I am not a member of the UDP, and that is true. When we started the Government when we put together a team, all of us were independent members, including the MP for Aoke/Langalanga when we became members of the UDP Party. The concern that comes out from the media is the Prime Minister's attitude towards the UDP. There is the allegation that the Prime Minister only picks on members of the UDP in the reshuffles and terminations, thus favoring members of the Kandere Party. That came out very powerfully. They even said the Prime Minister ostracized members of the UDP by removing them from key ministerial portfolios. They alleged that the Prime Minister should not do this because this is an insult to the Party that supports him to be the Prime Minister instead of original UDP member. The one that came out very strongly is that I took some of these decisions without consulting party leaders. And as explained by those who have already spoken, I really went to the latter by complying with the requirements of the PPIA when it comes to serious decisions of

reshuffling people, moving people and so forth. I consulted with leaders. So I do not know where this concern comes from.

On the Anti-Corruption Bill, it is very interesting. Now we are contradicting ourselves, all of you on the other side there—we are hearing different signals coming out, different statements being made. The Leader of the Opposition came out very clear saying they support the Bill, as it is now presented in its first reading on the floor of Parliament. They were saying they are going to support the Bill. The position of the group that left the government are twofolds or you could say is one. They want us to leave the Bill for now and towards the end of the term of this House, the end of the Tenth Parliament, before we put in the Bill again. That is no guarantee that that Bill will be passed if we leave it to that time. And there was this clear intention to just shelve the Anti-Corruption Bill. So all this nonsense about them supporting the Bill, you have to support it with some serious qualifications. That is not what the people of this country wants. They want this Bill to go through. We hear this argument that came out from the MP for Central Honiara that we should bring in traditional governance before we can consider the Anti-Corruption Bill because we must accommodate some of our customs in the Bill.

All the concerns raised by members of Caucus and Cabinet about this Bill that must accommodate our customary practices have been taken up in that Bill. And so if we are to wait for the Traditional Governance Bill, we might wait forever. It is just a strategy for us to delay this Bill. Corruption is continuing to happen and we cannot delay this thing forever.

On the Tina-River Hydro project, I just want to set the records right. I want to thank the Minister for Finance for his clarification on that project. The mover and anyone else on that side of the House have raised a concern about nothing really. As a matter of fact it is based on total ignorance of what this project is about. It demonstrates the willful ignorance of the former Minister for Finance who is responsible for this distorted understanding of national objectives underlying this project.

The mover in fact ignorantly and without understanding the objective of this project argued that Solomon Islands should be the majority shareholder because it made the bigger capital contribution. Whilst this is the normal commercial way of thinking, this project has a much bigger and nobler objective than the narrow thinking advanced by the mover out of ignorance on the advice of the former Minister for Finance who is the biggest stumbling block, not only to the smooth implementation of this project but the effective management of government finances which is at its worst in years.

And for the benefit of the House and the listening public, I made the following explanations on the Tina-river Hydro project. The Tina River Hydro project is the

flagship national project that has been identified for development by the Democratic Coalition for Change Government and is expected to provide massive benefits to the Solomon Islands economy by providing cheaper and more reliable electricity than diesel generated electricity. That is the objective.

The price of electricity to be reduced by the Tina River Hydro project will effectively be fixed over 30 years at a rate that will be cheaper than diesel generated electricity, and then an almost cost free from 2031 onwards. I need to emphasize this point that the primary objective of the Tina River Hydro project is to reduce both the cost and the cost variability of electricity in Solomon Islands. The successful development of the project will showcase and highlight the Solomon Islands as a safe and credible investment destination for foreign investment and private sector partnership. That is the primary objective, not ownership of the special purpose company. We need to really need to come out of this if we really want to move this country forward. And we must also have the same kind of thinking at some point in time about our own national airlines.

The Tina River Hydro project is the largest investment envisaged in the history of Solomon Islands, with an expected total cost of around USD\$240million for the dam, tunnelling and power station infrastructure, access road and transmission line costs that will be funded with grant financing, concessional debt financing and foreign investor equity. That project has been structured as Public-Private Partnership project whereby the private sector has been asked by the Solomon Islands Government to bid for the right to build, own, operate and then transfer (the BOOT arrangement) the infrastructure to the Government.

The international tender process was undertaken by the project office in 2014/15 to identify a suitable private sector sponsor, which we term that private sector sponsor as the 'independent power producer'. And from a group of 11 parties that expressed an initial interest in the project, two parties submitted their proposal for consideration with one of those parties rescinding its interest leaving only one party interest in becoming the IPPP for Tina River Hydro project, and that is the Korean Water.

Typically, under the BOOT arrangements, the IPPP is responsible of financing, developing, constructing, operating the infrastructure to sell electricity produced to an off-taker, and in this case, the Solomon Power. That is how we structured these things so that we appreciate the decision the government is taking. During the period of the international tender process in 2014/15, it was envisaged that the project will be funded 75-80% with debt and 25% equity, whereby the debt would be commercial debt sourced by IPP and the equity would be entirely provided by the IPP.

It emerged during the tender process that the commercial debt lending rates that were likely to be in the range of 7% to 10% and that the interested IPP's requires an internal rate of return of 13% or greater. This capital cost in the Government's view would have resulted in a tariff of greater than US\$0.35 per kilowatt rendering this project unviable.

Consequently at the conclusion of the tender process, alternative financing structures were explored and evaluated, and it was determined that the tariff could be significantly reduced if we look at concessional debt and grant finance provided by the Solomon Islands Government replaced the commercial debt originally proposed—because as a developing country Solomon Island has access to concessional debt and grant finance through sovereign debt facilities with international financing institutions. And Korean Water's dollar equity investment were reduced from the expected US\$40million that would have been consistent with a project leverage of 75% to 80% debt to 20% to 25% equity. So a formal tariff proposal was provided by Korean Water to both the Solomon Islands Government and Solomon Power in September 29<sup>th</sup> 2017 and this proposed tariff is the basis for negotiation whereby Solomon Power is responsible in negotiating technical matters relating to tariff and the Solomon Islands Government is responsible for negotiating matters relating to the financing structure.

To nail this down without going through much detail here, the objective of this project is to reduce tariff and not necessarily who owns this infrastructure. I thought I need to make that clear so that we do not use this as one of the reasons why we say the government has mishandled the Tina-river Hydro project under the leadership of the Prime Minister, and so we must remove him.

The favorite subject of this motion is the concern that the Prime Minister employs his nephew as the Chief of Staff. This is not a new story but the same old story the mover used in 2007. It is a concern to the ring leaders—and that is raised by the colleagues who have spoken already. If it is a concern to the ring leaders why is it not raised in Caucus when they were part of the government? I find this very interesting for the Leader of Independent to mention this, because if you can remember sometimes in 2015 or thereabout, I have a delegation that came to my house and proposed a deal to sack 11 or 12 ministers so that the group can come in and replace them. There was this clear statement made at that time that they have no problem with the Chief of Staff and so he can continue to work.

As my colleagues have already mentioned, the Chief of Staff is only a worker in the Prime Minister's Office and he is not indispensable but we have picked this as a very big burden and we want to bring down the Government because of it when it is just something we can just sit down and discuss, sort it out and come up with a solution. But we have never discussed it.

On the manner in which he was recruited, the Caucus was very clear. Recruitment to the chair of Government Caucus, Caucus insisted it must have a say on the people who would be recruited. But when it comes to the Prime Minister's Private Office, Caucus agreed to allow the Prime Minister the freedom to recruit the most capable and qualified people. And if this matter was an issue, I am surprised that not one of the people who now complained ever raised this matter to me personally or to the Caucus.

As a matter of fact, the people who are complaining are the very people that benefited from the service of the Chief of Staff. He helped them, went and see them in their offices and had discussions with them. There is a glaring hypocrisy in the advancement of this concern. If employing relatives in the Prime Minister's Office is a wrong worthy of punishment, then the mover of this Motion himself has at least three very close relatives employed as political appointees when he was with the Government. One of these was his in-law, the other was his nephew and the third was his cousin. They were employed. So if this is a wrong thing to do, let us look at our backyard and clean it first before we come and talk about it in Parliament and use it as a reason to overthrow the Government. It is not right! And these people are still working for the political government. These include the people I have just mentioned, and we did not remove them when the mover of the motion left the Government because they are good workers. They are still there working.

The same can be said about the Independent Group. The words used by the Leader of the Independent group are " nephews and cronies" were employed. I find the glaring hypocrisy there as not right, and we really need to re-think some of the things we are saying here on the floor of Parliament. We need to check them first.

The same is said about the former Independent Group in Parliament who joined the Government under the leadership of the former Deputy Prime Minister and Member for East Malaita. They brought with them their cronies and supporters, who are all engaged in the office of the Cabinet Sub- Task force. Everyone of them are still there, a huge group there. And yet we make an issue out of this! I have only one relative working in the Prime Minister's Office and he has been doing a good work. They made no issue about it. But what is it that is too special about the Chief of Staff that the mover of the Motion and the group who left the Government are so concerned about? Is it because he is the Prime Minister's relative? If that is the case, then I condemn the glaring hypocrisy! Clean up your backyards!

I am surprised that the mover and those who pursue this concern cannot see beyond their actions on this matter. For the information of Parliament, when the contract of the Chief of Staff expired, they are ones who renewed it. I left it in their hands since he is my nephew, so I tell them to look into it, if they want to renew his contract then they can renew it. If not, then leave it. So what are we complaining about?

The other issues raised here, and if I ask the question that everyone is asking, who are you talking to? The ministers that we are talking to are the ones who have left and are now on the other side. The person who mishandled this economy and government finances is the former Minister for Finance. There are some people who think they own these ministries. You remove them from there and it is like the heavens has fallen and everything is wrong. I am really surprised with this.

A number of issues that were raised here are issues that some of the ministers who have crossed over to the other side are directly responsible for. And are we not seeing them sitting on our side and so we go on talking like that? But the ministers who are responsible are just sitting down next to us. That shows how confused we are.

On private financial affairs—since when did Parliament enact laws that compels us to come here and be answerable to Parliament regarding our private properties? Maybe we should do that so that everyone of you should come and list down your properties. Come stand here and say I own 10 houses. Yes, it is possible that some have reached that number. For me, my house is located just beside the road so everyone pass by can see it. We did some good work recently by putting gravel on it. And we declare that to the Leadership Code Commission. The law tells us to declare it to the Leadership Code Commission. We did not come here and stand up in Parliament to answer for our private financial affairs. And as I have said, I have one property at the GBR and another one at Tasahe which we have declared to the LCC. And it would be interesting if everyone of us starts asking starting with the mover himself as to how many houses he has. And how did you build those houses? Did you get a loan to build those houses or where does the money comes from to build those houses? Or ask the former Minister for Finance because a lot of houses are being built up there. And they say they did not get loan, they pride themselves in not getting a loan in building their houses. Well, something is wrong Mr. Speaker!

When you look at our salary, how do you manage to own a house worth \$10million or \$7million—something is wrong when you earn only about \$6,000 a month and yet you say you did not get a bank loan. Something is wrong so we need to clean up our own backyard first before we start pointing fingers at each other.

Maybe we just need to do this in one session where everyone stands up and each one start listing how many propertis they own. The law does not require us to do

that. It requires us to declare it to the Leadership Code Commission. The Member of Parliament for Aoke/Langalanga can list down 'Sun Flower' and so forth.

*Laughter!*

Yeah, declare it. There is nothing wrong with Members of Parliament running a business. The Member for Fataleka, my inlaw is a successful businessman, one of the millionaires in Solomon Islands.

*Laughter!*

There is nothing wrong with that. There is nothing wrong with that one, just as long as you declare it to the Leadership Code Commission then we are on the right track.

This whole thing about me not consulting and appointing chairs of sub committees and transferring them shows that people just do not know what they are saying in Parliament. It is Cabinet that appoints chairs and transfers them as well. Submission goes back to Cabinet. If you want to move a chairman because it is a Cabinet subtask force and so it is Cabinet that appoints them and reshuffles them. It is Cabinet that is doing that. So when you talk about consultations, you cannot have a more glaring consultation than that, where our system is structured around a collective decision making process. It is transparent, open and all members of Cabinet see how these chairs were transferred.

Rely on advice of individuals outside of government—oh my what!" Or "listening to dubious characters—I just do not understand this. We run a collective decision making process and Cabinet is the supreme executive decision making body. Submissions are made by way of memorandum to Cabinet. Decisions are made that way and I cannot think of any time that I have been listening to any dubious characters or people from outside to advise me on government policies. I am insulted by that. That is not me. That is not how I run the Solomon Islands Government.

There are a number of issues raised, and you hear the Skyline and the NAZZER issues being mentioned. In fact, the Government was misled by highly paid political appointees who have connections to the UDP. They are the ones responsible for bringing the Skyline company that promised to build 5000 houses. They came to us in neckties and fooled us. They came with those highly paid government advisors. It turned out that those are con-people. I went to Fiji and checked up because they claimed they have business set-up in Fiji. What they only have is a huge signboard with the name Skyline on it. I asked whether there is anything else they have and I was informed nothing else but the signboard. We came back and I had to take some very serious decisions and fired those political

advisors. I told them they are not fit to remain at this highest decision making office of the land to advise the Government.

The same advisors also said that we will have 50 mini-canneries throughout the country, one for each constituency. The advice from the technical officers in the Ministry of Fisheries was that that is not possible. The most that we can afford is maybe two more canneries in this country. And we want to strategize by having one on Malaita and another one somewhere.

They have misled the government. They also misled Members of Parliament too and so people have really high hope that mini-canneries will be built in their constituencies. They shouted inside Caucus during our meeting with them. They said that they are advisors to Bainimarama, the Prime Minister of Fiji. That is what they said. They claimed to be part of the advisory to Frank Bainimarama. And so we believed them, but they are all affiliated with the UDP. So we have to terminate them.

The same issue with the NAZZER group. The NAZZER group was brought by the same people saying they are going to build the Kilu'ufi Hospital. By the way, in terms of the housing scheme, we are working on different models now. We are working with the previous Home Finance Corporation, the business arm of the NPF, and we are looking at other models on how to deal with this. We are securing about 1,000 hectares of land at the Lungga area for the 5,000 houses, and this will be built as soon as we secure that land. We have not dropped the idea, it was just that we have been fooled by these so-called 'advisors' to the government which resulted in us making some wrong decisions.

This was the same with NAZZER as well. They came with a list of things they will be doing. We entered into an MOU with them, and they committed the government to give them incentives but they did absolutely nothing. I am questioned here by the mover whether I have financial connections with the group. Yes, they rented my house but they never paid rent and they left.

I am not a fan of these people and we had to terminate them and send them out of this country and declare them never to come back to this country. I think the biggest lesson that struck me here is that we need to think properly again when we see these kinds of people coming into the country dressed in neck ties looking very neat trying to make deals with the government, we need to really think twice when dealing with people like that.

West Papua is very interesting as raised by the Member for Central Honiara. I do not want to go through all the descriptions of me, it is a very academic exercise which we will leave to another day to discuss those descriptions. But in terms of West Papua, we just need to be consistent here in how we conduct our foreign policy. We support New Caledonia's Independence, we support French

Polynesian's Independence, we are the main sponsors of that, and we will continue to put to the international community the issue of the people of West Papua, because they are Melanesians like us who are there. Up to now there are more than 500,000 to 600,000 people who have died just because they want to be heard. They want their concerns to be heard by the Indonesian Authority. They did not give them that. These people do not have the basic rights that we have. We Melanesians in this country enjoy land rights, we enjoy the simple basic rights that Melanesian enjoy, but they don't, they never enjoyed that. I do not have any fear for us to continue to put the case of these people to the international community and we did that at both levels at New York in the UNGA and of course, we continue to push that in the Human Rights Commission in Geneva.

I appreciate that maybe it is the time for us to strategize how we work and I will probably agree to a certain extent what the member for Central Honiara said. We may need to relook at our strategies because of the dwindling support of the world to the cause of our people in West Papua. The challenge for Melanesians—because we share the same skin color, culture and ethnic backgrounds—is because the world has pulled out we must also pull out from our brothers and sisters. It is quite a serious moral question for all of us to answer.

The second city idea, I have heard that so many times from the member of parliament for Central Honiara and I just do not know how we are going to achieve that. If he wants the Government to build a city, you will be building for a hundred years. So you have to strategize. You may need to do it through a special economic zone, and the Government is pushing that through. The idea is, you zone a specific area, give special incentives then you attract investors to come and build that second city. But normally cities are build around some activities. It does not suddenly appear as a City. You must start of with certain activities, either a fisheries center or other things and then you build and build and probably after 10-20 years you will have a city. But to go and build a city out of the government budget, when you cannot even fill up the potholes on the Honiara roads, you might as well forget the idea.

You can only do it through attracting investors to come and do that, and not for us to go and build the second city. It is a very good and nice idea. In fact the concept and the thinking behind the suggestion is very good and that is the way that we should be thinking—decentralize development from the center or Honiara to the people in the rural areas. We learnt that lesson from the ethnic tension where everything happens on Guadalcanal so everyone comes here because Guadalcanal attracts them, so they come and we caused this big problem. So the idea right now is to decentralize activities and we have been doing that for the last 10 years, since 2006 we systematically decentralize developments to the rural areas. Right now the total amount of money that goes to the Members of Parliament is \$350million per year. If we add other funds that goes to the MPs through other funding's then it

would be around \$450-500million. Half a billion Solomon Dollars goes to the rural areas through that strategy. The only thing now is how the Members of Parliament use that \$350million according to the strategies of the National Development Strategy so that we achieve the objective of the National Strategy. In achieving that you also achieve the objective of the sustainable Development goals, because come 2030 all of us will have to account to the world body for what we do to achieve the objectives of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Regarding the apology to Israel, we have done it. Our Governor General has written to his counterpart in Israel and we sincerely apologies to the Government and people of Israel for voting against them—this was made reference to by The Member for Central Honiara—it is just for the Government to have a Government team to go and visit the Prime Minister of Israel. We were invited early in February this year to go and strengthen that relationship but we have the foreign office and although the Government General has taken that move at his level it has to be formalize at the Government Level so that the Foreign Ministry will bring a policy to look at the Israel policy in Cabinet.

I can go on and talk but probably we will achieve nothing. I have problem understanding the reasons why our colleagues who left the Government did so. What did they leave the Government for? And it did not come out here. The Member for Shortlands was the only one who talked about the border issue and the Former Minister of Police has answered that. He was former Minister of Police, and it is an issue that we address jointly with the Papua New Guinea Authority. It is not an easy thing to do—but the others are very quiet and have not spoken. They hide behind the statements issued by people who are on the other side. Those who have left have not spoken.

So I watched this development very slowly when this people moved. I say this because when some decisions were taken and these decisions do not really affect them, they stayed put. But when the decision I took personally attacked them that is when they revolted against the government. They moved!

Sir, my dear Member for North Malaita, thank you very much the for the text that just came through. It says, thank you brother for the decisions that have been taken and thank you for serving you. As I tried to explain, I am in a very awkward situation—the amount of reports that came in on how things had happen there, it was absolutely not right. There were reports of people taking cuts from shipping grants and machineries, which is not right. I just heard one that just came to us yesterday evening saying to me very clear and he is from the West. He was applying for his project to complete his boat and he asked for \$2m. And the advise to him was, you increase it up to \$3m so that you get \$2m and \$1m for me. And I am not talking about the member for North Malaita. We can put it down on affidavit and JANUS will invest an attempt to corrupt a businessman who comes to

apply for his project. He was advised and the Minister has the audacity to tell him to increase the application to \$3m—you take \$2m and \$1m for me. This is just not right!

Three people in charge of this are the Minister of Planning, Minister of MID and Minister of Finance, and the three former Ministers were the Committee to decide on this. Projects were being given, and some of them were used to buy houses that are located on the other side of White River, there is a big housing estate there. It is the money from shipping grants for the purpose of buying ships that went there. You bought houses instead of buying ships. And now you cannot rent that place because many criminals live around there, so no one would want to rent that place. So they do not make money.

I think the idea was to use the money, make a bit of money from rentals before they buy ships, and they got caught up. So the directive to the Minister of MID is that, all of us who receive the money must be account for the money. You have to provide the receipts, and all the documents that show the money that was taken from MID for the transport funds and machineries. So the advise has been made and the Minister will ensure that is being done.

We are very clear in our policy as well on machines. And like I said, if we add up that \$350m plus the transport fund, plus the other money that went to machineries it can easily go up to \$500m - \$700m. Almost \$1billion went through the hands of Members of Parliament. It's a very huge amount of money. The policy was to buy ships and machines to fix roads or to repair roads. It is not for buying logging machines.

*Laughter!*

It is not right. We are just compounding this problem for ourselves. It is nearly a billion dollars used and no wonder why there is cash flow problem there Minister of Finance that we cannot pay up and we have a queue of payments waiting to be made because the payments went into these areas. Let us read this carefully, it is not for buying logging machines because you set a very bad precedence. What if all of us want logging machines as well? What will you do? What if we put all the money in our budget for this year on logging machines? Those are issues which are real issues.

*Hon Danny Philip interjecting:* Political will, man!

**Hon. Manasseh Sogavare:** Those are real issues and it is painful now to the Member for Rendova because he is the one who wants to buy the logging machines.

*Laughter!*

He wants to buy logging machines—

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**Hon. Manasseh Sogavare:** You tell that so-called senior man to stop talking before we will be okay. Those are the real issues! Not these nonsense that you people raised in here. This is the real issue when I stopped this payment at the Ministry of Finance, that is when they start to make this move to move out—when I reshuffled the Minister of Finance from there, he thinks that the ministry belongs to his father. As if he is the only one who can stay in the Ministry of Finance.

**Mr DOUGLAS ETE:** *Point of order! I really do not like the words, 'it belongs to your father'. This is Parliament, your Parliament Mr. Speaker. I want the Prime Minister to withdraw his words. It is not coming from a statesman.*

**Hon. Manasseh Sogavare:** I sincerely apologize and withdraw that statement. It is like that. We put people in ministries and they think that they own it. When you move them out it seems the world is going to end and everything is not right and we will be in big trouble.

The portfolio is given and done at the pleasure of the Prime Minister. If he sees that there is a need to reshuffle people he has to do so, and you just have to accept it. Once we do not accept it shows there are some serious problems happening. In fact we have some serious issue lately where people want to hang on to the Ministry and if you do not give it they will revolt, by moving across the floor.

That is the situation and it is not right. In fact I tried to understand the cause for why these people move out. When the Leader of Independent read out his points it does not make sense. Those things were not enough reasons for people to walk out of the government. They should come and discuss with the Prime Minister and we sort things. If the reason is employing your own nephew okay, lets terminate him and terminate your PA's as well

*Laughter!*

So that it is fair. It is not a one way thing issue.

As I say, I find it very difficult to tie in here as to what the real issues are so that is why I zoom it down to this one issue. In fact we had specific request from the Minister of Finance saying, please do not move me because I want to deliver the undersea cable through Huawei. What is so special?

We have a better deal now for the undersea cable. Huawei will no longer—and the cabinet will look at this thing—we have a better deal running from Australia. This will be three quarter of the price cheaper and all up front cost taken up by Australia and will run from there.

We are a family of nations in the region. We respect the sovereignty and the security concern of our neighbors. We do not do things that will affect their security. Australia is concerned about their security, so we had this serious discussions with their Prime Minister and ask them for help. If this cannot happen, but this is a major infrastructure project of the Government and the nation and we need Australia to assist us and they come forward. They just send in their letter which will be processed through the Cabinet, then we will officially invite their officials to come and sit down to finalize the project. So it is not longer Huawei. If that is something that we are concerned about, then I am sorry. We take decisions because we are not happy with decisions that are taken in the best interest of the Government and this nation.

I am very happy with the performance of the new Minister of Finance. And I am also concerned about the length of time people remained in offices. I have reports that Ministers are hardly in their office. Some of these decisions are taken because of that.

I am just probably talking loudly here when we know that this Government has come to its end, but I have to speak out. So far, the Leader of the Independent group and those who have spoken on this Motion did not convince this Parliament to justify voting 'Aye' to this motion. Not at all. When you vote 'Aye' on the floor of Parliament today, you will vote with a guilty conscious because you vote for something that is not right.

*Applause!*

This Parliament is about to exercise its constitutional power through us the elected members on a very important decision. A decision that we will take based on reasons that falls short of convincing this House for you to be able to say 'Aye' to it. As the target of this Motion, I have answered the issues placed before this House by the mover of the Motion and those who spoke in favor and against of this Motion. I have in my judgement clarified beyond all shadow of doubts the reasons for the Motion was not about the issues they alleged against the Prime Minister. The so-called issues are issues to camouflage their real agenda, and it is sad that innocent members of Parliament became hopeless victims of the design of this so-called 'senior politicians'.

*Applause!*

I have nothing to lose but all to gain in whatever the outcomes of the votes on this motion. I will walkout with my head up, with my head up, because I have done nothing wrong against the people of this country.

*Applause from the public gallery!*

**Mr DOUGLAS ETE:** Point of Order! I feel like this is a stadium. This is your Chamber Mr. Speaker, it is your Chamber but it is like a football field. The gallery is not allowed to do what they are doing now. This is your Chamber. Where is the Sergeant at Arm to escort them because this is not a football ground, it is your Chamber

**Hon. Manasseh Sogavare:** We have heard enough of the nonsense.

**Mr DOUGLAS ETE:** Point of Order! Let me finish Mr. Prime Minister..

*Mr Augustine Maeue interjecting:* This Parliament belongs to the people of this country.

**Mr DOUGLAS ETE:** And Mr. Speaker I think you should control your Chamber and so forth.

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, my apology. May I remind the people at the Public Gallery there please refrain from clapping and cheering. Thank you.

**Hon. MANASSEH SOGAVARE:** Thank you Mr. Speaker, for making that ruling. In fact there is nothing wrong with it. This is the People's House.

*Hear Hear!*

This House does not belong to us 50 Members of Parliament. Yes, this is your Chamber but it is the Peoples House! And so I just want to remind the people who want to stop the public from clapping in here, Mr. Speaker but you made your rulings so I will respect it.

As I said, I have done nothing wrong against the people of this country. My only mistake is I stood up against corruption and corrupt leaders. All of us will take a vote in either saying 'Aye' or 'Nay' to the Motion. A 'Yes' vote for this Motion is a vote to protect corruption and corrupt Leaders who are bent on protecting their corrupt agendas, and a 'No' vote is vote to continue the fight against corruption and corrupt Leaders from taking hold of the helm of Leadership of this beautiful country Mr. Speaker. God bless Solomon Islands from Shore to Shore, I beg to oppose the Motion.

*Applause!*

**The SPEAKER:** I will now call on the MP for North/East Guadalcanal and the Leader of the Independent Group to deliver his speech in reply after which I will put the question.

**Hon DANNY PHILLIP:** Point of order Mr. Speaker! I need to speak on some of the things that were said about me personally in this debate, if that is okay with you.

**Hon. MANASSEH SOGAVARE:** Point of order! Speaker, if that is the case Mr. Speaker, I will also be given the opportunity to make a reply.

**The SPEAKER:** Yes, I think the Honorable Prime Minister was the last one so now I will call on the—

**Hon. DEREK SIKUA:** Point of Order. This is my Motion and I would wind it up whenever I am ready to windup, so you should give the opportunity for anybody on this side of the House just as you gave to the other side of the House to speak. If there is any member of this side of the House still want to contribute, I think you should be fair to us and allow them to speech before I wind up.

**Hon. MANASSEH SOGAVARE:** Mr. Speaker, this is your chamber and you are the last man down to have the final say. If you say that the mover winds up the debate and you make that ruling, then that is your ruling. It is just that I am the target of this Motion, and technically everyone should speak before me. They have remained silent and have not spoken until after I spoke that they want to speak. Procedurally, this is not right. I am the target of this Motion. So you have made your ruling, Mr. Speaker.

**The SPEAKER:** I am also not feeling well, and I call on the honorable Member for Northeast Guadalcanal and the Leader of the Independent Group to deliver his speech in reply after which I will put the question.

**Hon. DEREK SIKUA:** Thank you Mr. Speaker and like you, I am also feeling sick as well. I am carrying with me a basket full of Panadol. I understand that we are all very tired and by now we would have spent around 9hours debating this Motion.

Firstly, I would like to thank all Members of Parliament on both sides of the House who have contributed to this Motion and I would like to thank all colleague Members of Parliament, including the Prime Minister for the manner in which we have debated maturely by not attacking each other personally. It did went close to that but otherwise, I would like to thank everyone on both sides for that. From myself, if there is anything I said against any of my colleagues on the other side of the House, I seek your forgiveness.

There are a number of things, which the Prime Minister and other colleagues on the other side of the House did mention and I think running across the comments from the other side of the House, including my good friend the Minister for Foreign Affairs, is that this Motion is too light, it holds no weight and indeed has no grounds to overthrow the government. Section 34(1) of the Constitution, from which the Motion is derived, does not require you to have any reason. You do not have to have any reason to move a Motion of No Confidence against the Prime Minister, absolutely not. Let me read Section 34(1) to you: 'If a resolution of no confidence in the Prime Minister is passed by Parliament by an absolute majority of the votes

of Members thereof, the Governor General shall remove the Prime Minister from office, whereupon the Members of Parliament shall meet as soon as possible during the same session of Parliament to elect a new Prime Minister in accordance with the provisions of Schedule 2 of this Constitution'. That is all.

Your introduction, Mr. Speaker, when you introduced the motion is straightforward. You do not have the numbers, you do not rule, you have to go. It is of course, as you said, a fundamental principle of our democracy and that is, majority rule. If I want to I would just stand and move the motion—the Prime Minister says what he wants to say, I wind it up, no body talks. It is simple as that because the constitution is very clear.

That is why I start of with giving him the opportunity to resign and then he did not want to so we have to spend nine hours to debate this, but it is not necessary. I guess it is for the people of our nation, we can do what has been done and we have done this twice already. It is accountability reasons I suppose, but we do not really need to, the constitution does not require you to have a reason, just numbers.

That is on the Motion not having any substantive reasons because I do not have to have any reasons. As long as I have the numbers, in line with Section 34(1) of the constitution, the numbers is all you need.

The Prime Minister said that I have been used and that I am an opportunist and this is the second time I have done this because I want to become the Prime Minister again, the first time, when I came into Parliament, I was only in Parliament for 18months then I moved my first Motion of No Confidence against the Prime Minister, I do not know why they chose me. There were a lot of other senior and long serving politicians at that time, but they chose me to do the job. Anyways, I took it up and then after that they nominated me to be Prime Minister. But it is not something that I want, it was just a job that I did on behalf of the group which is the same as this. When we discussed this, the members of the group agreed that I will move the motion. I said them, do not do that to me, I do not want the Prime Minister to be angry with me, because this is the second time. But I agreed and so my good Prime Minister, this is a group decision so I just carry it out. Please do not be angry with me. It is not about me wanting to be Prime Minister.

You may remember honorable Prime Minister when the honorable MP for South New Georgia Rendova Tetepare and former Minister of Development Planning and Aid Coordination went down in 2011, you and I were in the same group. Then we had an elimination, yourself, my good friend the MP for Aoke/Langalanga and MP for East Honiara. Then we had 28 in our group which means we had the numbers. As you know I got the majority, but I refused on the reason that it was just 11months ago that I was the PM, so I suggested my good friend the MP for North Vella and the group agreed. So we finished our meeting at

2am and I declined my nomination. We dismissed and I went back home to attend. Since it was Sunday morning the next day I was attending church service in the morning when I received an urgent call to return to camp because it people are deserting the camp.

I mean if I wanted to be the Prime Minister, another opportunity for me is when the MP for South New Georgia resigned. So the camp broke then and the former MP for Gizo/Kolombangara came in. But my good friends who were there then will tell you, at that time I was nominated but I declined the nomination and gave the opportunity to my good friend the Foreign Minister and MP for North Vella la Vella. So when we dismissed everybody went their way leaving us as the Opposition Group at that time.

As is a democratic process, I do not know what process the group will agree on, but it is simple as that. Those of you on the other side say, many of us on this side want to be Prime Minister. That is not the case at all. Whoever the Group agrees on we will go along with that. We have work to do, so we just need to get on with it. I am not really an opportunist.

The issue about our good colleague MPs needing medical assistance overseas absolutely do not need to thank you Mr. Prime Minister. It is already in the Parliament Entitlement Regulations as Members of Parliament. For all of us who is sick whether you be in the Opposition or Government you can go because it is in the Parliamentary Entitlement Regulations. You do not have to — of course because the funds are in the PMO vote or here in Parliament you might need the Speaker — but you really do not need anybody to thank because it is your entitlement as Member of Parliament. So I do not know why you need to be thanked by these good colleagues who need medical assistance overseas in their letters when they left you.

The Tina River Hydro is NCRAs project and of course adopted by the DCCG. It is good that you make movement on this, but I think because it is the doldrums for quite sometime, leave it to the experts. There are people who know more about these things than we do and so I would like to think that we leave that for experts to get busy on it. However, my worry is this nephew of yours is also a Director of ICSI. I do not know why you put him in ICSI when he is a political appointee. I just want to say that it is good that you managed to get Tina-river Hydro off the ground.

For NAZA, you said that it is brought in by people from UDP - I do not think so. Who is this, Rence Sore and Patterson Oti are they UDP people? There is also one Francis Para, I think they brought in NAZA. And they say the PM also benefitted from it in terms of medical expense for his wife in Brisbane and a few US dollar fro

PM and the wife when they attended the UN General Assembly in 2015, and then they also rented your house—

**Hon. MANASSEH SOGAVARE:** Point of Order! He should have raised those earlier on so that I could have made a reply to. I totally deny that and would like to leave it at that.

**The SPEAKER:** Please refrain from personal attack.

**Hon. DEREK SIKUA:** I will accept your ruling because if I am to say some more it will introduce new material and to be fair to my good Prime Minister he would not have an opportunity to respond to it. So I will leave it at that.

So Sir, with these few remarks I beg to move that the National Parliament of Solomon Islands have no confidence in the Prime Minister.

*Applause!*

**The SPEAKER:** Honorable Members, the question is that the National Parliament resolves that it has no confidence in the Prime Minister.

Normally under Standing Order 41, a collection of voice is taken first before a division may be called. However, section 34 – 1 of the constitution expressly states that a motion of no confidence may only be passed if it is supported by an absolute majority of the votes of the member there of. It is unlikely that I would be able to determine whether or not this motion has the support of that kind of majority by a simple voice collection. And as such we will go straight to a division in the manner set out in Standing Order 42.

#### **VOTE BY DIVISION ADMINISTERED BY THE CLERK**

*(Parliament votes on the Motion)*

**The SPEAKER:** Honorable members the result of the vote by division is as follows:

Ayes 27 - Nays 23

*Question agreed to*

*Motion of no confidence in the Prime Minister is passed*

**The SPEAKER:** Honorable members although the motion is passed the honorable Prime Minister remains in office and performance his normal duties until he is officially removed by his Excellency the Governor General in accordance with Section 34 (1) of the Constitution.

I therefore call on the honorable Prime Minister to exercise his constitutional powers and move the adjournment. And inline with precedent of this, I suggest that the honorable Prime Minister move a special adjournment so that at its adjournment today the house adjourns to the day after the new Prime Minister has been elected.

### **MOTION OF SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT**

**Hon. MANASSEH SOGAVARE** (*East Choiseul—Prime Minister*) (06:35): I move that at its adjournment today, Parliament adjourns until the day after a new Prime Minister has been elected in accordance with the Constitution.

*Question agreed to*

### **ADJOURNMENT**

**The SPEAKER:** In accordance with earlier resolution of the House, and pursuant to Standing Orders 10(5), the House is now adjourned until the day after a new Prime Minister has been elected.

*The House adjourned at 6.36pm*